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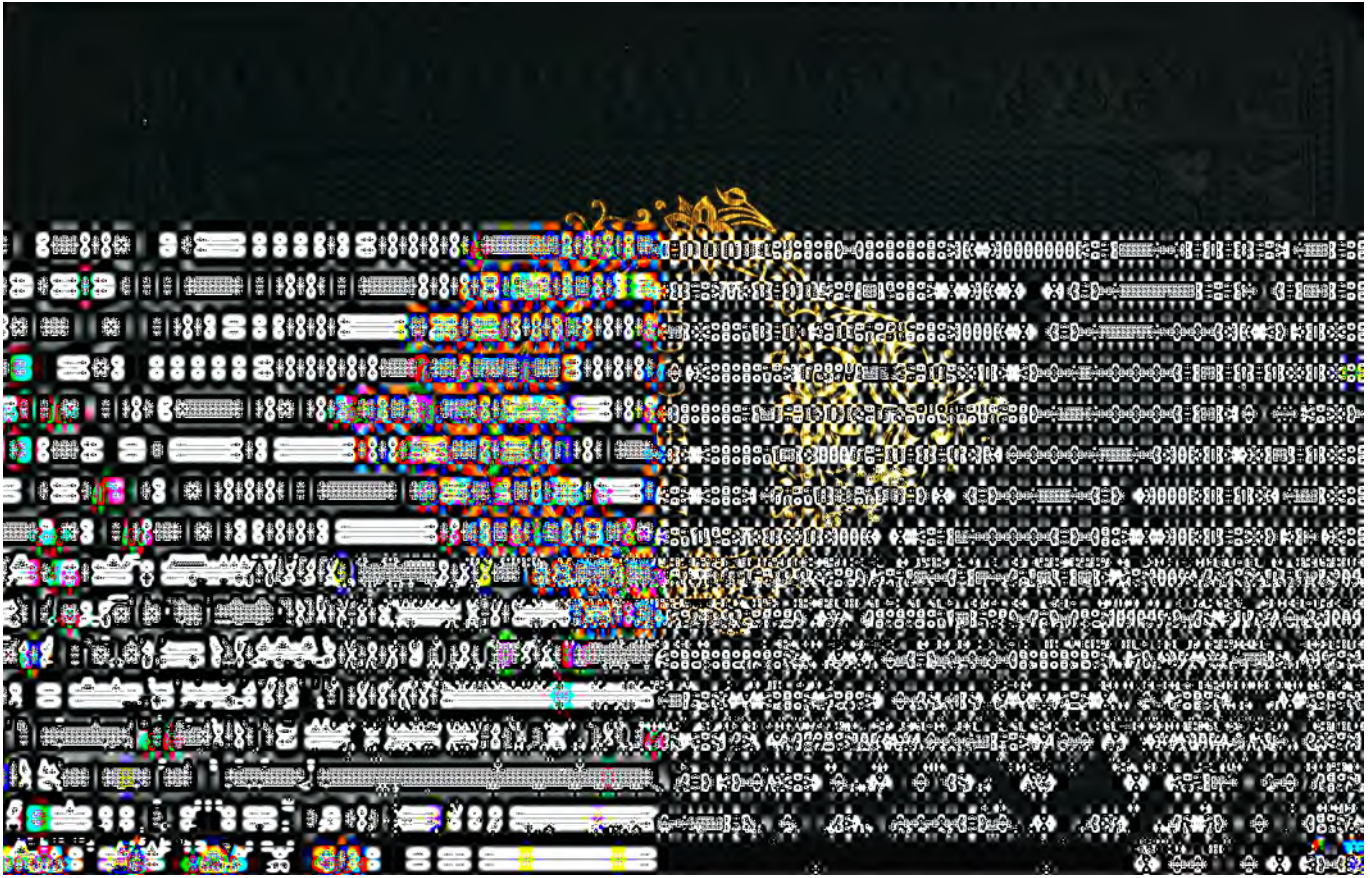

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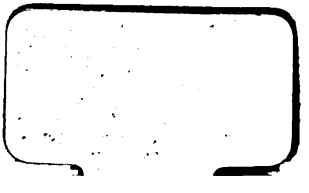

CACHE-CACHE.

CACHE-CACHE.

A Tale in Verse.

Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out:
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

IN MEMORIAM.

WILLIAM DAVY WATSON, M.A.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

M.DCCC.LXII.

280. c. 139.

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PROEM.

Is it a dream or is it simple sooth ?
Nay, let the reader answer. If the book
Opens anew one half-forgotten nook
Of joy or sorrow in his buoyant youth :
Or for one human frailty wakens ruth,
Which he, in timely penitence forsook;
Recalls one transient tear or tender look,
Revives one hope or fear—for him 'tis truth.
Truth is more wide than fact. Experience bows
A handmaid in Imagination's train,
A faithful witness, whom her Queen allows
To ratify but not usurp the reign,
The reign o'er space and time her power endows
With wealth of life and passion, joy and pain.

CACHE-CACHE.

I.

A Modern Happy Valley.

The English lakes! I bless the Providence
That cast my lot where all His glorious works
Of hill and dale and stream more glorious shine
Than elsewhere in our land—an Englishman,
In England's fairest scene. Among those vales,
Not least in loveliness is Arrandale,
Nor Ormathwaite the home least lovable.
Here, son succeeding father, have we dwelt,
In this long, low, white house, with sycamores
O'erarched, from days before the oldest tree

Of all the hoary grove a sapling bent
Beneath the blast from which it shields the roof.
Statesmen those fathers, and their names yet live
On huge black cabinets which grace our rooms,
Like this whereat I write, with emblems carved
Of the first garden and the lonely ark,
And bearing on its front in gothic lines
Oft traced by sister Kitty's hand and mine—

> For lobe of him that placed me here,
> Keep me as well as I thy gear:
> Walter Threlkeld: 1590.

Guarded by craft not less than lock and key,
A treasure-chamber was each press of old,
That well might tempt the border-riders' greed.
And one e'en yet, Aunt Rachel's special care,
Hides in its cunning cells a goodly store
Of silver ware, the work of many an age,
With monograms engraved that tell of daughters
Wedded away, but leaving their old home
Proofs of the love it kept within their heart;
Whose story our dear aunt would tell so oft,
Reading her various spoons with faithful eyes,
That in the end our father took good heed
The kindly gossip always had the same.

"A. F.," she'd say, "Ann Foster. Wat, my dear,
That was your great great aunt. She married Foster,
The doctor of Penrith, the very year
The Scots cam' o'er the border wi' Prince Charlie."
Aunt Rachel sang the words, as if to screen
A lingering favour for the white cockade—
"Foster was pressed"—Was pressed, Aunt Rachel, pressed?
"To tend their sick and wounded, and so fell
In trouble with the king's men; and our folk
Hid him within Meg's cave—you know Meg's cave, Wat?"
I knew it well; for 'mong my earliest feats
Was climbing there with Thornie, our tall shepherd,
A buzzard's nest to rifle in the crags.
But truce to gossip. While our house thus kept
Unchanged the outward look it wore of old,
My father trod not in his father's steps,
But hid the statesman 'neath a traveller's mien
Learnt in far-distant lands. Ere twenty springs
From Scawfell's rugged sides had thawed the snow,
Since that which saw him born, the stripling threw
A wallet o'er his shoulder, and went forth
From Ormathwaite before the sun was up,
With no farewell except to dear Aunt Rachel,
Who loved the tale, though tears it always drew.

So only, I have thought, he might escape
From a new happy valley. Several years
He roamed afar, but paid his sister's love
With constant letters, till at last she wrote
How their poor father lay with sudden sickness
Stricken, 'twas feared to death. Then hurrying home,
The wanderer, no prodigal, returned—
Too late, too late, he was not bid farewell.
And I have deemed the watchful tenderness
Wherewith Aunt Rachel smoothed the world for him—
That world of home, so rich in joy or woe—
Bespoke the memory of some saddest sorrow
Seen once and ne'er forgotten.
I have said
He wandered far; but several of the years
He dwelt in France, and thrilling years they were,
When "the vine-covered hills and valleys gay"
Hailed "the day-star of liberty"—woe worth
The song of our too sanguine poetess!
Deep drank my father of the burning time;
Hung on the words of Vergniaud; joyed to win
A passing smile from fair Roland when she
Checked his impatient "Must the king be doomed?"
And heard the vote; then met his friends again

When a like doom was theirs, with jesting braved
To youth that seemed heroic, but might leave
A cynic taint when youth was past away.
Flying the murderess city, forth he fared
To seek the hills that rampart freedom round,
Guarding the treasure in those walls of ice
Whence slow distilled three mighty rivers flow
North, south, and east; and reaching various seas,
Through all the world seem born to waft afar
The praise of freedom. Vain the message then.
Great Rhone, his waters reddening as they rolled,
Might catch the dying wail of fair Roland,
And loathe the horrors done in freedom's name.
Nearing the stream by night, my father found
The land alight with fire. A vast château
Was flaming to the sky, while round it howled
Freedom's good votaries, glorying in their work.
Father and mother, sons and daughters, all
Died of that house save one. One desolate child,
Rushing in terror from its rifled nest,
Fell in my father's arms. Quick wrapped from sight
Within his cloak, he bore the maid away,
Nor stayed his foot again, till 'neath an Alp
He knelt upon the grass, and prayed aloud

God's vengeance on the furies forging bolts
To serve earth's despots many a year to come.
Should Switzerland, betrayed like sad Savoy,
E'er lose her birthright of asylum, then
Let her remember that she bred Rousseau;
Dreamer of dreams, still cherished e'en by those
Who then beside his lake with exile's eyes
Looked back to Paris, wondering must they count
The guillotine among the rights of men.
With them my father lingered; his young charge,
Who scarce could spare him from her sight, bestowed
With some good burghers. Stunned she seemed at first
By the vast anguish of that dreadful night,
And never wept, but to my father clung
With trust in nought beside. Inquiry showed
In France no kinsfolk left her, save one cousin,
A soldier serving then before Toulon.
Her sire, a light free-thinker of the day,
Espoused the revolution. Emigrants
The rest, like others slighting their proud rule,
Noblesse oblige. With them my father offered
To leave the little maid. But at the word,
Aunt Rachel still historian—"No," she cried,
"Us they forsook, our country, and our king;

"I will not know them; let me come with you—"
Then, trembling like a leaf, dissolved in tears,
The first he saw her weep. And so with him
Marie Delaunay came to Arrandale.

Home to his heritage my sire returned
A most accomplished gentleman. The world
Had been his public school, and tamed a mood
Once too self-willed, yet given a soldier's mien
Befitting well his figure, tall and spare.
For Marie's sake he decked our ancient home
With comforts wondrous in the dalesmen's eyes,
Who deemed the maid a sort of fairy queen,
But loved her, says Aunt Rachel, like their own.
Why quote Aunt Rachel? Did our rugged herd,
Old Thornie, ever name her, and not dash
A tear from his brown cheek? Could Alison,
Our scarecrow nurse, of little Marie speak,
Nor soften her harsh voice? Did not the dame
Who ruled the Royal Oak, full often bless
My boyish face for favouring, so she said,
The bonny mistress? For, ere seven short years
Had seen her shine the sun of Ormathwaite,
Marie Delaunay was my father's bride.
But season after season passed, and I

Saw not the light until the nineteenth age
Itself was ten years old.
Ah, that I could
Recall my mother's smile, her voice, her touch!
Visions of wavy curls of dark dark hair
Falling around my face, and starlike eyes
Down-gazing from their shadow into mine,
Come indistinct at times; at times my lips
Seem to feel kisses never felt again;
At times my ear thrills to a low soft laugh
As 'twere when first I tottered o'er the grass,
And then my baby hand once more will clasp
A slender finger gently stretched in aid.
But these dim images are haply fruits
More of Aunt Rachel's memory than mine.
She died, my mother, ere four springs I knew,
And left me and dear Kitty, two years younger,
Our father's solace and Aunt Rachel's care.
Short is the story of our early lessons—
Books were a luxury our father scorned—
Had they not ruined France?—so few were ours,
But those few old and good. Quaint Fuller's Worthies;
The golden sermons preached at Golden Grove;
The history of King Arthur; Bunyan's Pilgrims—

La Mancha's Knight; the queen Scheherezade;
Shakspeare; Pope's Homer; and Telemachus;
In Latin, Ovid and the Mantuan bard—
These were the chief. And through them, as we grew,
We ranged at will, taught letters by dear aunt:
French by our father; Latin—this was mine—
By Andrew Morton, pastor of the dale.

A common sorrow, far too deep for words,
Had linked the curate to my father's heart.
He, too, was widowed, and his young wife slept
Near my own mother, 'neath our chapel's shade.
Who that has heard our service for the dead,
Most touching requiem, read beside the grave,
Where, dust to dust, his heart's best half goes down,
Can ever see the page within his book,
Nor feel the buried love well forth anew
With grief rebellious still? What then of those
Who, having once so heard that requiem read,
Read it themselves for others? This great woe
Had left its note upon the curate's lips
In all the services—a wailing tone,
Broken by sighs which strangers might distress,
But made the dale-folk love him all the more,
And most my father.

Nor was this their sole
Bond of attachment. Morton's chosen light,
Among our church's worthies, was the prelate
Who gained the mitre Sancroft's conscience lost.
The archbishop's three tall folios filled the place
Of honour on his shelves; nor came I oft
Into his library, but one lay spread
As lately used. My father held his faith
In silence, speaking only to express
Disdain of controversy. "Truth and good,"
He used to say, "are found in every church.
Hold fast by these, and pray. Nor fret, because
Some ill or falsehood mingles with the right.
Be not a pope, nor own another's pope."
But dear Aunt Rachel, meeker in her mood,
Would fain prefer a staff, and vaguely yearned
Towards our non-jurors, vaguely, perhaps, towards Rome.
One winter night I yet remember well—
We sat around the fire, the dark oak walls
Bright shining to the blaze—Kitty and I
On our low stools enrapt in Giant Despair;
The curate busied o'er a fragrant bowl;
Our father slowly smoking; on the rug
Puss pillowed soft against the terrier's neck;

All silent save the clock that ticked outside—
When dear Aunt Rachel roused us, murmuring,
In her soft way, a sudden portraiture
Of Calvin and the Pope, not flattering
To stern Geneva's saint. Then Morton said,
Cutting in twain a lemon,—" My dear madam,
Look at this fruit, this half shall be the Pope,
And this John Calvin "—
" Sour enough the pair,"
My father interposed. The curate squeezed
Each half into the bowl. " We'll drink," quoth he,
" What good they hold; and then there lies the Pope,
And there John Calvin," flinging right and left
The empty husks. " Wat," said my father, smiling,
" Take Calvin and the Pope, and put them both—
Where both would put Aunt Rachel—in the fire."
And I obeyed, not witting what he meant,
Then read again with Kate of Doubting Castle.

My father's flight had turned his course of life
Just at the age when neighbourhood makes friends—
Familiar friends I mean, and few were ours;
None I need mention here. A weary ride,
Some twenty miles of rugged mountain road,
'Twas then to Castleton, our market town.

All is now changed; the rugged mountain road
Has lost its old alarms; and chaise and car
Hurry the pleasure-tourist o'er the pass
Through scenes among the grandest of lake-land;
While Ormathwaite, which then a horse's hoof
Sufficed to empty of its inmates, hears
The roll of wheels unmoved. But Kate and I
Had reached our teens before the dale was known
Much more than Timbuctoo.
Yet though shut out
From what in towns is called society,
Far from a solitude was our dear vale.
Finsthwaite, its capital, was justly proud
Of its snug hostelry, the Royal Oak,
And buxom landlady, whose English cheer
Oft drew the neighbouring statesmen to her board;
And down below, not far from Arranmere,
The valley's gorge another hamlet held,
Grouped round an ancient ruin, green with moss,
Of old a grange of Furness monks, who owned
A manor there. A separate cluster lay
Nestling in either coom beneath the hills
That split the dale above—one Wandale called,
And stretching towards the mid-day sun; the other

Winning in spring and autumn his first beams,
And Deepdene named. The summer revel held
At Finsthwaite gathered young and old from all,
And heartier lads or bonnier maids than then
Danced at the Royal Oak, you scarce might find
In England's length and breadth.
And if our books,
Though choice, were few, one mighty volume lay
Always unrolled before us, such as falls
To few men's lot to read. Your nearest hedge
Will shelter lovely flowers; your laziest stream,
Sleeping beneath its willows, or detained,
Not loth to linger, rushes midst and reeds,
Yet makes variety; your flattest fen,
With sky-line all unbroken by one tree,
Will show you wonders, be it but the march
Of ghostly mists or shadows thrown by clouds.
But Nature, charming prodigal, is fain
There most to lavish all her choicest wealth,
Where fewest eyes may see. From early spring,
When bank and copse with primroses were gay;
On through the season when the budding woods
That robe the fells, were echoing musical
With groups who beat the bark from new-felled oak;

To those late days of autumn when each marsh
With stars was glittering of Parnassus grass—
Of flowers a changing mantle decked our vale,
Not given to fen, or hedge, or lazy stream.
Every moist hill-side showed the lilac bells
Of dainty butterwort. White saxifrage
Its pink eye opened in the sheltering rifts
Of each high-towering crag. In shady dells
Touch-me-not balsam bloomed. Each streamlet's bank
Was graced with queenly globe flowers. Then the ferns,
So strange, so beautiful, so coy, so bold,
Memorials of the world pre-Adamite,
How should I tell them all from her their chief,
Regal Osmunda with her stately fronds,
Down to the mystic moonwort that might lure
Midnight's weird herbalists? In winter's gloom,
When all else slept, the mosses still rejoiced,
And Kate and I oft lingered, half in awe,
O'er their grotesque uncouthness, in the nooks
Of those unmatched museums, our stone walls.
But nobler forms were round us than the flowers.
Full from our windows seen, at Deepdene's head
Two giant crags uprear their cloud-crowned fronts,
Serene in grandeur as the awful pair

That keep o'er Egypt's sands their lonely watch ;
Closing an avenue guarded on the left
By slopes oak-forested, and on the right
By rocks no foot may climb, with birches flecked,
Beneath whose shade, just where a coom strikes deep
'Mong Glaramara's roots, sequestered stands
The valley's modest church. Thence Wandale winds
Southwards through rugged mountains towards the peak,
Monarch of English hills ; and near our home
Within a coppice shelters four vast yews,
Sung by the Lakes' own minstrel, canopying
With shade no sunbeam cheers, a herbless gloom,
By Kate and me believed the unholy haunt
Of shapes in twilight whispers shadowed forth ;
While higher up, the river of the dale,
Arran herself, leaps from her mists full-voiced,
Heard amidst rain for miles.
Rain ! hast thou seen
Rain among mountains ? Many a time did we,
Kitty and I, from our bay-window watch
The storm sweep down the dale. Sheets of white water
That seem the skirts of some tremendous pomp,
Like robes of Amazons on Grecian frieze
Broke off below the knee, fly waving by

In endless file, enshrouding all the view
In gloom more stern than night's; while from the hills,
O'er howling wind and hissing rain supreme,
The mountain torrents roar in chorus round.
Close by the homestead, little Orme, our beck,
Chafes in her stony bed, and rolls along
Great boulders from her source. Down Wandale sounds
The full deep boom of Arran Force, and quells
A hundred lesser cataracts that spring,
Born of the tempest, from the crags around.
Then Deepdene sends, in pauses of the wind,
The Lisa's steady rush, as through the meads
She surges with brown waves, in haste to join
Her more tumultuous sister. But we know,
Though see we cannot, that by this time Lisa
Has scorned her common bed, and spreads her strength
Far over Deepdene's fields. Then let the storm
Be passing off, and through the lessening rain
The pair begin to loom. See Kitty start
Away for hat and plaid, or plaid alone,
And forth we sally o'er the reeking ground
Beneath the streaming trees. A foot-path leads
Beside our beck, to where a slender arch,
With ivy hung, the brawling torrent spans.

Pausing a moment here, we note anew,
Fall after fall, how Orme comes down the hill.
But Kitty looks at me, and on we race
Up Wandale through the wood. Each five-score yards
A runner flings its silver from the bush—
As Kuhleborn would stay the knight's advance;
And Kate puts back the damp curls from her eyes—
Her mother's eyes, Aunt Rachel always says—
And springs across the barrier like a fawn.
'Tis Arran Force we seek—our chosen sight
After great rain. No stop we make to-day
Beneath the enchanted yews, but scour along
In breathless haste, so fast the river falls,
Till turning sharp a bend of the ravine,
Pulse, eye, and ear, all throbbing, own the spell.
Far to the sky, above the cataract's leap,
Fantastic spires of ruddy rock ascend,
And all their rifts are white with foaming ghylls,
Rushing to swell the mightier flood below,
That robed in clouds of spray, but shining through,
Down thunders to its pool. Here long ago
Did Kate and I discover a great stone
By rocks o'er-arching screened, a natural grot.
There folded in our plaids, we sit enthralled.

Pity it were if life's stern discipline
Could disenchant the scene. That rocky seat
Has deeper interest now. I still can sit,
And so can Kate—though matron mother she
Of six unruly bairns, whose distant mirth
Now rings a cheery strain through all the house—
Beneath the rock and wake the charm anew.
But infant fancy, quickened thus too soon,
Easily gains a necromantic sway,
And makes the child a seer. What wonder, then,
If Kate and I the fearful glamour learnt,
And quaked in darkness at each object near?
Just the fit crone to foster such dismay
Was Alison, our nursery sibyl. Rich
In all the tales that teach the mind to see
Things the eye sees not, from the vulgar fears
Murmured in cradle rhymes, to legends wild
Gleaned from all spectre-land, she used her lore
Without or stint or scruple to subdue
Our childish mutinies, or hush our griefs;
Low muttering—Who goes round the house by night?
With ogres threatening us, or summoning
The water imp that haunted the dark pool
Above the ruined mill in Finsthwaite coom.

Our father mocked our terrors, but so mocked
As gave them stronger life, by narratives,
Fearful at first, but in the end grotesque;
Like the wax image in Udolpho's vaults,
That disappointment of my riper years;
Missing his aim, for we believed the fear
But never shared the laughter. Our dear aunt,
Perhaps thinking superstition not the worst
Of two grave errors, soothed our young alarms,
But soothed them as one careful not to quench
Credulity, that counterfeit of faith.
Better defence the gentle creature gave,
When, cherishing a mother's fondest care,
She heard our simple prayers to Him whose wings
Shield us in darkness as in light. But sleep,
To infant lips that brings their earliest smile,
Brings terrors too; and then the dreamer waked
Feels the fell presence near him in the gloom.
Soon those twin sorcerers, twilight and the moon,
Their magic ply, and whiteness through the shade
Takes ghostly life, embodying without
What fancy first imagines from within.
In dreamland Kate and I through childhood walked,
A dreamland won from books. No Crusoe ours,

To raise a mimic island of our own,
But in that old romance, like ruined castle,
Full of dim corridors that end in chasms,
And chambers long debarred to foot of man,
We found the story of the creature strange,
With voice like hounds in cry, that led brave knights,
In lonely chase, to dangers unexplained,
With choice to do or die—the Questing Beast.
That beast became our demon. First we tried
To frame his shape, a long, lean shape we thought,
That glided more than ran, of moonshine hue.
And then we guessed his haunts. 'Twas near Carlisle,
King Arthur, full of sleep and weary, saw
The creature drinking at a spring; saw once,
And ne'er again. Carlisle was not so far
From our own valley. So, 'twixt jest and earnest,
We gave the beast a home within the wood
That clothes the fells of Wandale. Those great yews
Were surely there when stout Sir Pellinore
Followed the quest—there now the beast might dwell.
  We nursed our phantom till we learnt to feel
The secret dread and blindfold reverence,
Wherewith the Druids fenced their mystic groves;
Treading the dim arcades of Wandale wood

As those who seek what yet they fear to see,
Deeming each bush might screen the shape unknown.
A creaking bough, an acorn dropped to earth,
A pebble started by a wandering sheep,
Would hold us spell-bound. More than once we sat
Against the trunk of one of those great yews,
Till something told us on the other side
The beast was couched, and springing from our form,
Like timorous hares we scudded down the hill,
Not looking back. In any shape of white
Seen after dusk, such as the moon will cast
Upon the bank of a deep lane, thick-hedged,
We saw the beast, and fled. At length one night,
Upstairs sent on an errand, I returned,
The errand unaccomplished, wan with fear.
Upon his knee my father took, and soothed me,
Till I confessed my dread at something white.
Kitty alone knew all the words implied.
"Wat," said my father, gravely, "if you'll go
And bring that white thing down, this shall be yours,"
And showed a coin. More influenced by the fear
Of being thought afraid, than by the prize,
I went; and Kitty wished, love mastering fear,
But at the door my father called her back.

Upstairs I rushed, and clutching fast my ghost,
Came down I scarce knew how; but at the door
Kate fell into my arms. I held a shawl.
I was the first to laugh, my father last.
That evening was an era in my life.
I had achieved the beast. Some fancies still
Might haunt our path, but neither Kate nor I
Again resumed the thread of our romance.
King Arthur lost its charm, the spell was broke;
And mystery, Aunt Rachel's aid to faith,
Became a thing to question, not to fear.
No other fears were ours. 'Mong living things
In open day few bolder were than we.
Our homestead boasted a whole tribe of dogs,
Our playmates from the cradle. On the moor,
Round Raven crag in Deepdene, roamed at will
A horde of ponies, whence we, knight and lady,
Courser and palfrey chose, and scoured the plain,
Heedless of tumbles. Then a sight was Kate,
Cheering her little steed, and laughing till
The rocks all rang again, her hat's wide brim
Flapping upon her shoulders, while her plaid
And long black hair streamed in the breeze behind.
Her little ones revive the happy days.

School broke these joys. In vain did kind Aunt Rachel
Plead for delay, and ask what Kate and I
Could do without each other. Tartly came
Our father's answer,—"Half a boy he makes
Miss Kitty, and she makes him half a girl.
I'll none of Plato's aboriginals
At Ormathwaite," our father said. He liked
To overwhelm poor aunt with long hard words
That taxed her wits for days. But at the time
An Indian fan, all carved with creatures strange,
One of our earliest wonders, she would spread,
And raise a mimic whirlwind in the room,
Quelling the argument.

The day soon came,
And on a pony stout, 'neath Thornie's care,
For Castleton I started. Kitty rode
Beside me to the hause that separates
Ormeside from Greendale. Slowly up the hill,
The merry runner singing a farewell,
We fared together. Thornie stalked before.
Elate was I with thoughts of going forth
To find another world. Myself I called
A true knight errant bound to prove his worth
By slaying dragons and encountering giants,

In honour of my lady, Kate the dark.
Soon vanquished knights, red, green, and black, would come,
Like those Sir Gareth humbled for the love
Of Lady Lyons, low to kneel before her,
Vouching my prowess. She would smile and say—
He is a valiant knight. But Kitty shook
Her clustering curls, and though she tried to laugh,
Her eyes were wet with tears. The hause so reached,
We kissed each other, and she turned her pony
Towards the descent. Then first I felt my grief.
Old Thornie stayed his march, and I looked back
Till Kitty gained the first concealing turn.
There she, too, once looked round; and soon I heard
Her pony scampering down the rugged track.
A mist came o'er my eyes, but Thornie took
My fallen rein, and on our way we went.

II.

A Parody of the World.

In after years emotions far more keen
Have thrilled my breast when leaving our still dale
To face the world outside. Unknown was care
That bright fresh April morning. Hope and pride
Then filled my heart, as light a heart as cheered
The sheep-dogs bounding by my shaggy steed.
Before me lay a valley long and deep,
Enfolding far below two shining lakes,
And in dim distance opening on the plain
That spreads to storied Solway. High aloft
Above the zig-zag track, a precipice frowned
Of blackest slate, a quarry that might yield
Its wealth for ages, yet not lose its awe.
Old Thornie stalked beside, as poplar straight,

Despite his three-score years, north-country tunes
Now whistling shrill, now chanting some bold song
Of border prowess, now the chances telling
His simple life had known. The tales were old,
But children like old stories more than new.
'Twas now the sheep he rescued from a ledge
That crossed the precipice near Arran Force;
Then how he hung, suspended in mid air,
O'er Raven crag, to spoil the eagle's nest—
The royal bird's last home, and save our lambs.
Or of the simple lad, his own dear boy,
Who, scared 'twas thought by tales like Alison's,
At nightfall feared to cross a lonesome bridge;
And straying from the footpath through the snow,
Was found the morrow, frozen stiff and stark
Where two walls met.
"'Twere better he had faced
The bogie, master Watty," Thornie said,
With quiet little laugh, but brushing fast
His hand across his eyes—"His will be done."
There came a day, day little dreamed of then,
Like grief was mine, but not like comfort too.
So on we fared, and left the shining lakes
Behind us in their mountains; issuing forth

'Twixt fields of young green corn, and budding hedges,
O'er which soon rose the old grey tower that gave
Its name to Castleton. Outside the town
Stood Ascham-house. There Thornie left and told me,
If e'er I wanted help, to send to him,
By farmer Wilson, who at the Black Bull
Put up on market days, and he would find
Some one should thrash the town in my behalf.
I laughed at the grand promise. We shook hands;
And, mounted sideways on the pony stout,
The old man rode away.
Like bather bold,
Not foot by foot encountering the flood,
But, leaping headlong, so I plunged among
My future school-fellows, some five-score lads,
Not like the bather to emerge, and shout,
And joyous cleave the waters. I was stunned.
The term had reached its noon, and work was hot,
And play was hotter. Entering lone that world
Of busy ardent life, my spirit quailed.
All was so rough and rude; the cold white walls,
Bare floor, mean benches, and unsightly desks
Of the vast school-room desolation cast
Around my home-sick heart. At Ormathwaite

All was so warm. I shrank beneath the gaze
That met me everywhere, and seeking out
A quiet corner, poured forth all my woe
In round text to Aunt Rachel, praying her
To come and take me back to Arrandale.
The grief soon passed. I loosed the apron strings,
As Kitty's knight to fare. A cheerful place,
Despite its aspect cold, was Ascham-house,
With a trim garden round it, and beyond,
The ample playground, gravel half, half grass.
Such shouts, such laughter, such exuberant glee,
As from that play-ground rang—palæstra termed
In school grandiloquence—were death to grief.
"Boy," to the destined bard of Christabel
The awful doctor said, to check his tears,
"The school's your father; boy, the school's your mother;
The school's your brother and your sister, boy;
First cousin and next cousin, and the sum
Of all relations—let's have no more crying."
No such capacious consanguinity
Did Ascham-house demand my tears to chase.
Long words were there in fashion. The palæstra
Typified all the rest. Like monks of old,
Refectory we called our dining-room,

Our bed-rooms, dormitories. Twenty lads,
Classed by their age, beneath a master's care,
In each long chamber slept. But ere to rest
The guardian came, an hour or more elapsed
To story-telling or to mischief dear.
Our prayers were read in public, and then first
I lost the habit dear Aunt Rachel taught.
My earliest night my comrades craved a tale,
And favoured by the darkness, I began
That of the Questing Beast; and gathering strength,
At hearing my own voice, declared at last
The creature still walked Cumberland, and might,
For aught I knew, our playground visit. Stillness
Reigned o'er the narrow couches when I ceased.
Next day a boy, my junior by a year,
Came to me grave, and asked if what I told
Were really true. He spoke with winning mien,
And I for answer gave him all the tale
Of Wandale and the shawl. So from that hour
Were I and Caleb Fenwick faithful friends.
My story's triumph gave me confidence,
And then my course was rapid. In a week
Of an unruly match at "bolstering"
I found myself the scape-goat.

Punishment
Was a complex affair at Ascham-house.
Unhonoured there the royal sage's rule;
Unknown or birch or cane, or spiteful tawse,
The plague of Scottish palms. Our naughtiness
A scheme of marks controlled—small mimic coins
Of brass and copper, bearing Latin saws,
Palmam qui meruit ferat; Multa tulit
Fecitque puer—many things indeed.
For lessons well rehearsed, for standing first
In class, for work done in the hours of play,
In short for all kinds of school goodness, you
Received so much school money. You were fined
So much for every lapse. The bankrupt boy
Saw not the playground till by extra toil
He earned his freedom. Passing free at will
From hand to hand, our coin performed the part
Of gold and silver in the older world.
Of one another with it knives we bought,
Or school-boy luxuries, nay, real pence.
We had the millionnaires and mendicants,
Misers and spendthrifts, gamblers and, perhaps,
knaves,
Wherewith the despot money fills his realm.

A powerful engine must those marks have been
For future weal or woe.
Nor ended here
Our likeness to the greater commonwealth.
For graver crimes the culprit boy was brought
To solemn trial. Mid the school arrayed
In silence round, the prisoner at the bar
Held up his hand, and pleaded, and was tried
By a boy judge, and jury formed of boys.
Boy counsel were appointed for each side;
The charge was opened, witnesses were called,
Speech made for the defence, the case summed up,
The verdict given, and the sentence passed,
Just as in real courts. But was it well,
I since have asked, to cast such bitter shame
On hearts so young? Is shame at any age
A wholesome discipline for boys or men?
No thoughts like these could mar the interest
Which then those trials possessed. At times a farce
Followed the tragedy, when civil suits
For libel, or assault, or breach of faith,
By humbler names in school-boy rhetoric known,
Called forth our counsel's mettle, and the court
Adjudged the winner damages in marks.

Still more, we boasted a boy parliament.
Each month the school in conclave met, and chose
Its law-makers. Equality was not
Our rule. The head boy named a member; then
The two below him; till the twenty last
Returned but one. The parliament thus formed,
Committee called by us, made all our laws,
And fixed the penalties for all defaults.
A master sat with it, but did not vote.
It met in public, and full long and keen
Were often the debates. Do you conclude
That licence was the rule of Ascham-house?
Never, I fancy, would you find a school
Where petty edicts so much curbed and fenced
The liberties boys love.
Again: we owned
A press and theatre. Elate the scribe
With prose or verse permitted to adorn
The Ascham Magazine, a quarto thin,
Written and printed, edited by boys.
But prouder he, allowed to fret his hour,
Euclio or Sosia, Sganarelle or Scapin,
On Ascham's stage, a stage might envy claim
From many a country town, complete with drop

And side scenes, traps for ghosts, and curtain green.
Ah, wondrous time, the eve of holidays,
When Castleton its grace and beauty sent
To see old Plautus—pantomime, I fear,
To most fair hearers. But that trial past,
With fierce Bombastes we their patience paid,
Or Pyramus and Thisbe, as performed
Before Duke Theseus. Wondrous time, indeed,
Which boys should cherish, ere stern manhood brings
Action and passion that no feigning bear.
Still more resemblance to the larger world
Might I describe. The military rule
That marked our musters; the societies,
Benevolent, gymnastic, hygienic,
Terpsichorean—numerous as those
Which hold in merry May their annual feasts;
But 'tis enough. Nor need I pause to tell
How emulation each young student urged
Forward in quest of knowledge, every talent
Winning its share of rank. Abundant field
Might young ambition find at Ascham-house.
The race was there to the swift; as now we seek,
With doubtful wisdom, competition's aid
To make it in the State, thus limiting

Our choice of servants as in private life
We never dream of doing ; robbing too
Worth unsuccessful of the one poor solace
Left by the prophet king.
Not mine the task
Here to discuss a scheme, which thus retraced,
After long lapse of years, may raise a smile,
But which we boys believed in, and enjoyed.
No common mind was his who formed the plan,
What time the rod still swayed omnipotent
The realm of boyhood. He with South might deem
That " stripes and blows are of all remedies
The last and basest, fit for such alone
As carry in their backs their brains, with souls
So dull and stupid as but serve to keep
Their bodies from putrescence." Thence arose
And grew into its strange luxuriance
That parody of life.
And since to mind
I call the teacher, long since lost to men,
Yet living in our school-rooms, let me speak
My memory of his worth, revered by all,
And loved by those he singled from the herd
For studies which his own enthusiasm

Rendered no task-work. Happy was the boy
By him at night conducted to the height
Of his observatory, and there taught
The silent constellations, or allowed
Through the great telescope the wondrous rings
Of Saturn to behold, or landscapes strange
Betokening the throes that in her youth
Convulsed our placid moon. From him I learnt
To love the science which its plaything makes
The abyss of space, and with magician's power,
On a few postulates and axioms rears
The system of the skies. At Ascham-house
The practice matched the theory. Enough
Trigonometric lore acquired, we went
With rod and flag, theodolite and chain,
Forth through the lanes and fields, a mirthful band
Of young surveyors, long before the days
When fear of railroads roused the jealousy
Of watchful landlords. One sharp winter, when
The lakes were frozen hard, upon the ice
A base we measured, and the nearest mapped,
Making the mountains echo to our glee.
Yet would you err to think us e'er allowed
To call play work, or slur our needful tasks.

The contrary were truer. Intellect,
Perhaps too highly prized, and trained to seek
By question free a reason in all rules,
Might some day ask, and answer crave in vain.
Trust is a wholesome habit for the young.
Nor should you fancy our school politics
Our ardour damped in sport, or quenched our love
Of mischief, the knight-errantry of boys.
Cricket and football, all the gymnast's art
With us found honour due, and honour gave
To thew and sinew. There's a legend tells
Of spectral riders wont by night to mount
On earth-born steeds, and ride a furious race,
So that when mórning came the beasts were found
Bemired and jaded. Round staid Castleton
Might many a farmer deem his horses bore
Such ghostly riders. But no tales I tell,
True to the good old maxim, out of school.
  The river, too, that round the castle swept,
Bore witness to our spirit. There we bathed,
And fished, and poached. In all that land of streams
There's not a lad but deftly throws a fly,
And many a war did we with strangers wage
To keep some favourite pool. A dearer charm

For me the river owned, for 'twas the same,
Though newly named in its long wanderings,
That ran down Arrandale. In graver mood
Roaming along it, oft I breathed a wish
To read in its bright ripples of the home
Amidst its native hills. There many a time
Had it reflected Kitty's laughing eyes—
Why with the acorn that from Wandale wood
Might have been borne, not bear her image too?
Not but that letters came; Aunt Rachel's words,
So kind and watchful; Kate's round hand and news
Of all our childish cares; our father's lines
Oft crossing hers—my memory holds them all.
Rapidly fleeted those spring months away,
And as the holidays, my first, drew near,
Kitty enhanced my eagerness for home,
Writing in words, that, round as wondering eyes,
Stretched all across her page:—"Papa has brought
A little girl from France to stay with us;
I like her very much—her name's Roland."

III.

A New Face.

So Thornie Hesketh with the pony came
Home to convoy me; and rejoiced was I
My little hand in his great wiry fist
Once more to lay, that burning day of June.
My first return from sojourning away,
My old familiar pony, and the dogs
That leapt up to my shoulders, and their muzzles
Thrust in my face for joy—it seemed a dream.
E'en Caleb Fenwick, whom the day before
I thought it grief to leave, forgotten was
In half a mile. Old Thornie's wrinkled face
Lighted with glee, as by my side he strode.
"So, Master Watty," said he, "you ne'er sent

For me by farmer Wilson?" Loud I laughed,
And sang exulting from the heroic lay—

> We will not tell what men we are,
> Nor whose men that we be;
> But we will hunt here in this chase,
> In the spite of thine and thee.

"Hurrah," the old man shouted, flinging high
His staff in air to catch it as it fell;
"Hurrah," I answered, while the sheep-dogs barked,
And then more tranquilly we fared along.
'Mong many questions, one for Kate's new friend
Drew Thornie out. My sister like and me,
Some look, he said, Miss Roland seemed to show
Of the late mistress, but so wan, and frail,
And shy, in her black dress, that Alison
Called her a witch's bairn, and changed at nurse.
Few words she knew of English, but she spoke
With a kind accent and a winsome smile.
Much more he said, for which I substitute
A little history, learnt in after years.
In telling of my father's flight from France,
I named a cousin of the maid he saved,
A soldier serving then before Toulon.
Some minds there are whose faith no sins can shake

Towards their chosen idol—his was one.
True to the Revolution he remained,
And held its crimes for mere excrescences
Sprung of the old corruptions of the State.
Under its fiery flag he marched to fame,
But to his dream still faithful, broke his sword,
That day his chief dashed down with conqueror's hand
The Phrygian cap to seize the imperial crown.
He and my father were already friends;
For he, recovering upon easy terms
The family domain, the title claimed
To dower my mother. Hence a friendship sprung,
By visits strengthened soon as peace arrived,
And by Delaunay's interest in the land
Where men could live by law; and so were free.
He then was married, and the little girl,
Now come to Ormathwaite, the only child
Inheriting his name. A letter called
My father hurriedly away to share
In a sad tragedy. Some foolish word,
Lighting upon Delaunay's blameless wife,
Had fired the spark, which, fanned by devilish hands,
Might stir Armagnac feuds, or urge the fiends
Of fell Bartholomew, or give to flame

That dread September's holocaust of blood.
Oh, heed it well, the savage thread that runs
Through all men's veins, more cruel making men
Than the wild beasts that only kill to live.
Delaunay fought, and fell. And his poor wife,
Who knew the tale she innocently told
To be the quarrel's cause, bowed down her head,
Impeached herself his murderess, sunk, and died.
My father's ward Delaunay left the maid
Whose name betrayed some yearning cherished still
For those bright days when first oppression fell,
And liberty kept holiday in France.
So merrily fared I and Thornie on,
Under the bowery hedge-rows, through the fields
Of waving corn, and entered soon the pass
Between the mountains grim, and skirted then
The pair of shining lakes, and wound with toil
Up the long zig-zag, 'neath the precipice black,
Towards the hause that parted us from home.
At length a turn disclosed the ridge's crest,
And there, clear-outlined 'gainst the evening sky,
Sat Kitty on her steed. How fast I left
Old Thornie far behind! How fast did Kate
Come scouring down to me! How then we kissed,

And laughed, and cried! Such greetings are not now,
The very children grow demure and old.
And as we rode more slowly up the hill,
With what mild mirth did Kitty overflow!
How ruthlessly she rallied all my boasts!
Where were my dragons slain, my heads of giants,
Where all my vanquished knights? No dragon she
Had heard of, save one viper, killed by Thornie;
No head she'd seen than Johnny Mooney's bigger,
The idiot boy of Finsthwaite; not a knight
Of any colour of the rainbow came
To her to bend the knee. A craven knight,
Kitty averred, was I, fit but to ride
Behind Sir Kaye, and keep the kitchen ware.
Her laugh was love, as side by side we rode,
Our hands fast locked together, her arch eyes
Flashing upon my face. At last I sought
To hear of her new friend; but then on mine
Sudden she turned, demanding how I dared
To choose a friend called Caleb—hideous name!
She always meant, she said, to wed my friend;
But wed a boy called Caleb—not for worlds!
Upon the ridge for Thornie we made halt,
And Kate was silent while I looked on home

And all the dale. But from the rocks around
Leaping and sparkling in the sunshine broke
The little runners nourishing our Orme.
I told my sister how I sought her face
Within the stream at school. She laughed again,
But softlier than before. "Ah, Wat!" she said,
"Another face you'll have to look for now;
If I'm to love your Caleb—frightful name!"
Again cried Kitty, "you must love Roland."
Thornie came up, and soon a greeting loud
Welcomed us home. Quick through the house we ran
To where in front, upon the new-mown lawn,
Fragrant with haycocks, dear Aunt Rachel sat,
And knitted peacefully, while up and down
Our father and the curate paced in talk.
No clouding care the scrutiny of love
I think foreboded. All first questions asked
And answered, round my father looked, and said,—
"But where's Roland? The boy must know Roland."
Then from a tump of hay, where low she sat,
Screened by Aunt Rachel's chair, a slight shape rose,
And glided forwards, with the thin wan face
And sweet smile on the lips that Thornie said;
And when her white wee hand she held to me,

Saying some gentle words in French, I saw
The delicate frailness, knew the winsome tones,
Which, too, the old man mentioned.
Soon I found
My father's question—where's Roland? was one
Her friends might ask each hour throughout the day.
Fern-seed she might have gathered, and unseen
Become whene'er she pleased. 'Twas this, no doubt,
Made Thornie deem her shy, for shy she was not,
And older seemed than Kitty or myself.
But a strange way was hers unconsciously
Of shrinking out of sight; a self-concealment
Helped by her quiet mien and scanty speech.
Dear, sweet Roland! That tragedy was yet
Scarce a month old; no wonder to me now
Her wistful looks and those retiring ways.
You came into the parlour, glanced around,
And thought the room was empty; so sat down
To work or read. Then soon to your surprise,
From shade of window-curtain, or the depth
Of a great chair, or o'er the sofa's end,
Roland's wan face came out, and gazed at you
With large sad eyes a moment—then was gone.

No wonder 'twas perhaps that Alison
Saw something eerie in the stranger maid.
So, too, at evening, when our household ring
Was gathered sociably, but one alone
Would know Roland was there. On a low stool
She sat, or cushion, now beside our aunt,
Screened by her dress, a fold of which she held;
Now by our father, hidden by his chair,
But clasping in her own the hand which he
Over the side let droop. In those first days,
Shrinking from everybody's sight, she seemed
To every one to cling. And afterwards,
When time had soothed her grief, and mountain air
Coloured her cheeks and lighted her soft eyes,
And she familiar grew with Kate and me,
So much her ambush ways she still retained,
That once my frolic sister called her Cache-Cache,
And soon the name passed current through the dale.
Well might the dale-folk love her; but Aunt Rachel
Stood first among her friends. To her I owe
Most of these memories. In the winter nights,
When we two, left alone at Ormathwaite,
Sit dreamily beside the spacious hearth
Where blaze and crackle the great Christmas logs,

And redden with their glare the wainscot dark,
The kind old soul will lay her knitting down,
And saying, "Now we'll talk about old times,"
Pour forth a stream of little anecdotes,
Too trivial to rehearse to stranger's ears;
As how our Cache-Cache used to hold her skeins
Of silk or worsted, or the Bible read;
Or learn her derivations of the names
Our mountains bear—"which neither you nor Kate,
You saucy things," aunt says, and taps my hand—
"Would ever do." For these same derivations
Formed one of dear aunt's hobbies, and she loved
To trace the meaning of each sounding word.
Great on Catchedecam, or Cat-sty-cam
As she declared it should be, was our aunt.
But while she argued, Kate or I would ask
The source of "Robinson," the name less grand
Owned by a hill near home, at which her hands
Aunt Rachel raised in horror.

For my father
Cache-Cache might happily revive the past,
But also claimed attractions all her own—
A mind refined and subtle, but controlled
By noble instincts, and the humble trust

Which best secures true peace. Men most admire,
If free from vanity, what most they lack;
And praise repose, while nourishing unrest.
To seek has greater interest than to find.
True—for all else than truth. But truth once gained,
No matter how, too precious is to hide,
Only to seek anew. No toy is truth,
For light diversion to be shut from sight,
That then the seeker may come in, and go
From nook to nook inquiring—do I burn?
Or turn from left to right and right to left,
Just as the music, louder now, now lower,
His footsteps guides. Yet such the quest becomes
When speculative reason rules the keys;
But with this difference, that too oft the chase,
Like that of the strange beast by Arthur's knights,
Comes to no end but death. Then—what is truth?
Ask rather, if on asking you are bent,
What truth is not, for this may answer gain.
Whatever misses to content the mind,
Whatever leaves a blank within the heart,
Whatever fails to fill the yearning soul,
That is not truth, be sure. Those thirsty wastes
No coverts yield for truth. The music sinks

Fainter and fainter, while you weary toil
To find truth 'neath the sand, as if it owned
Some kindred with the idols sepulchred
In plains Egyptian. Then turn home again;
Become a little child, one fit to bear
The rod detective of the secret spring,
And seek the jewel where in youth's meek days
It lay serene and pure. It lies there still,
And brought to light by music of the spheres,
Will make the desert blossom as the rose,
Content the mind, the heart in peace becalm,
And comfort pour around the yearning soul.

My father loved the quest, and fain would wake
In other breasts a spirit like his own.
So as we children grew, he tried our wits
With questions fitter for the casuist school
Which taught the end may justify the means.
Thus once he asked—What should the follower say,
When bid to tell the road his duke had gone
To his assassins? Kate and Cache-Cache spoke,
My sister quickly—he should tell the truth;
Her friend more calmly—he should silence keep.
But I, then practised in our school debates,
And fresh from arguing whether Regulus

Did right to heed his oath, discussed the point,
Raising a war of duties, and contending
Silence was death, and death was suicide;
So came to no resolve. My father asked—
"But what, then, would you do?" "What Cache-Cache says,"
Kate answered for me, welcoming with joy
Her friend's solution. And in truth I think
My heart and lips as much at variance were,
As of the shepherdess the feet and eyes
In the old idyll.

Cache-Cache, from the first,
Went to our church. Her father's will enjoined
That in her guardian's faith she should be trained,
Though nursed in that of Rome. Her years were those
When for the child its mother is the prophet
Through whom it knows its God. That guidance lost,
And sadder loss a child can never know,
The little neophyte may give like trust
To whoso fills the place. Aunt Rachel's bent
Might smooth the change for Roland, whose young mind
Was richly stored with all the saintly lore,
Said by a foe into one tome to roll
The people's prayer-book and Arabian Nights;

Yet waking echoes in most human hearts,
And loved by good Aunt Rachel. So the maid,
With her for teacher, in our chapel rude
And simple worship might take part, nor pine
Too much for her late ritual.
Rude indeed
The church of Arrandale, a huge stone barn,
Chilly with whitewash, both outside and in,
Flooded with light from casements large and plain—
Light, queen of colours, through her slaves best known,
And o'er the western gable bearing high
One harsh-toned bell, the summoner to prayer.
Within are pews unsightly; and the pulpit,
Hideous and vast, the altar hides from view
Of half the worshippers; while opposite
A clumsy gallery holds the village choir.
Uncouth the temple, and untuned the choir;
But round them rose the mountains, and rang out
The anthem of the winds and waterfalls.
From where we sat we looked into the coom
From Glaramara scooped; and on rough days
Saw the white ghylls come foaming down the crags,
The slender birches bending 'neath the blast,
And sturdy oak-trees battling with its rage.

Close round the burial ground, a gloomy wood
Of ancient hollies, whose white monstrous stems
Shimmered like ghosts amidst their sombre leaves,
The fell-side clothed, fit organ for the storm
Its dithyramb to sound. There whilst it pealed,
Would Cache-Cache sitting by me press my hand,
And then for us the temple made by men
Passed all away, and in our hearts we felt
His presence near, who clouds His chariots makes,
And rides upon the wings of mighty winds.
Devotion warmed by symphonies like these
Would scarce regret the mass's chants and pomp,
Or for cathedral glories change the church,
Whose bounds the mountains were, whose roof the sky,
More than its own white walls. Yet rude the trial.
Loud lively tunes the dale-landers enjoyed,
Pitched to a hautboy shrill. Their favourite psalms
Were those—Oh, come, loud anthems let us sing,
And—All ye people, clap your hands—to airs
Between a march and dance, with long repeats
And flourishes eccentric, which the clerk,
Waving his arm, like leaders more renowned,
Exulting led, while e'en the curate smiled,
And then forgetting his old sorrow, beat

Time to the jocund strain.
In after years
Cache-Cache herself would train the choristers,
And win more tuneful song. But ere that time
Great change had stolen over Ormathwaite.
The scanty library had given place,
My father's scorn relaxing, to long rows
Of volumes choice of writers old and new.
Then a piano, wonder of the dale,
Through summer twilight breathed its melody
Along the whispering fells. The pleasure-town,
At foot of Arranmere, sent teachers out
For Cache-Cache and my sister. Visitors,
Friends of my father in far distant days,
Came at our house to stay. And I meantime,
At Ascham-house still passed my schoolboyhood,
And learnt the joy of holidays, a joy
Too apt to fail us as we older grow.

IV.

Day-Dreams.

A FRIEND indeed did Caleb Fenwick prove,
On me reflecting all the qualities
Which I most wanted, and which he possessed.
The younger son of a good family
In Westmorland at Oakthorpe. Thirty years
Of friendship close, confirmed by nearer ties,
May warrant my recording what from him
The world would never hear; what Kate perchance
With female selfishness would wish it should not,
Seeking no rivals in her own regard.
Peace, sister mine; 'twas I that knew him first;
Leave me his school-boy days, and keep the rest
Wholly your own. A steady, resolute boy
Was Caleb then, who never slurred a task,

But perhaps took long to do it; slow to learn,
But ne'er forgetting what he once had learned;
Sincerity itself, and deeming others
Sincere as he; so easy to beguile,
But difficult to anger; not reserved,
Yet not familiar; one whom few boys liked,
But none disliked, and all desired to know.
After a time my father bade me ask
My friend to visit us one midsummer,
And Caleb came. We rode together home,
And Kate and Cache-Cache met us on the hause.
A roguish glance in my fair sister's eyes
Broke through the smile of welcome, but the laugh
Was not on her side long. For Caleb, trained
By those best teachers, elder sisters, showed
The ease and frankness social commerce gives,
And awed poor Kate, yet chased away her awe.
They rode together, and her merry laugh
Soon told she was herself. Cache-Cache and I
More gravely followed. What inspired Roland,
E'en from the first, with that strange interest
She always showed for me? Why were her eyes
Oft fixed upon my face with gaze that seemed
To seek the soul within? Why in my ear

Would she breathe words that bade the present fly,
And brought the future close? A welcome faith
Guerdons our footsteps with angelic guards,
Unseen, unheard, but still to conscience near,
With warning or support. Are these allowed
Ever to dwell within the form of one
Loved by and loving us? So deem may they
Who in a mother, sister, or dear friend
The guardianship have found.

My father looked
At once on Caleb with the favour won
By manly bearing and a candid face.
"Glad am I, Fenwick," soon he said, "my son
Should own a friend like you." The curate, too,
Told me in private, "Be but like your friend,
And answer all my wishes." And dear aunt
Benignly smiled on one who listened well,
While she expounded some high-sounding name,
Or told some ancient tale. So Ormathwaite
Made much of Caleb Fenwick.

Busy days
Were those of his first visit. We had then
Just entered the surveyor's mysteries,
And tried our knowledge in a great attempt

To ascertain the height of Raven Crag.
A graduated arc of cardboard served
To take our angles, vertically raised
On tripod formed of sticks. The telescope
A slip of deal supplied, that turned at will
On axle driven through the centre point.
Our base we measured with a knotted cord.
Ah, pleasant hours on sparkling Lisa's side,
In Deepdene's flowery fields, when madcap Kate
With merry mischief wasted all our toil,
And Fenwick patiently repaired the loss,
And Cache-Cache watched us with those pensive eyes
That always seemed to look the present through.
The end, I fancy, was as near the mark,
As his in Lilliput, the mountain man
Who measured with a sextant, and produced
A garment three good English miles in length.
  Another golden time in memory bright
Is that hot afternoon when forth we went
To pic-nic on the shore of Sparkling Tarn—
The lonely pool which gives our Arran birth,
And high among the fells at Wandale head,
Reflects the sun declining to the sea,
Thence seen afar beyond the dale which holds

The solemn depths of Wastwater. The day
Was one of those when shimmers all the air
With limpid haze, through which ravine and rock
Look shadowy and spectral; and the hills
Loom dim in ghostly grandeur. Calm the eve,
So that no rush of all that fringe the tarn,
Bent o'er its glassy mirror. On the left
Rose Scawfell's precipices, bare and grey,
Riven and scarred by cataract and storm,
And scored by glaciers that ere man was born,
Rivers of ice, descended to the plain;
While opposite sloped Gable's treacherous screes,
Down which in zig-zag sharp a toilsome path
From depth to depth might lead the gazer's eye,
Until it found the mountain's base, where smoke,
In long blue columns rising from the trees
To bushes dwarfed by distance, told lay hid
The dalesmen's homes. Below them gleamed the lake,
Struck sheer by the steep Screes, while o'er it shone
The yellow harvest ripening in the fields;
And still beyond expanded the great sea,
Specked with white sails, and radiant 'neath the sun.
One ship sailed straight up the long avenue
Of splendour lavished by the royal orb,

And so it sailed, slow, tranquil, steadfast on
Till rapt from sight in glory of the west.
"Watch that ship, Walter," in her low sweet tones,
Cache-Cache had murmured—"Does it teach us nought?"
So school to holiday, and holiday
In turn to school succeeded, and we friends,
Fenwick and I, had reached the upper form,
Where boys begin on boyhood to look down.
In prose and verse the Ascham Magazine
Confessed me author: on the Ascham stage
Fenwick as Mercury with blows had forced
Me, Sosia, to disown my proper name;
And I as Scapin paid him in his coin,
When as Géronte I had him in the sack.
In our burlesque I revelled royally
King Artaxominous, with glee enhanced
Because my friend, demure in woman's weeds,
Played fickle Distaffina. Pleasant days,
In which, perhaps, the future, seldom much
By youth regarded, found too little care.
One Christmastide my father suddenly
Brought the dim prospect full before my view.
"Walter," he said, "the years are running by;
'Tis time we looked a-head. Your Ascham-house,

Is but a mockery of the greater world,
And trifling ends with boyhood. Have you thought
What there your course shall be? Think of it now.
Consult your friend. If well you choose, and win,
We may give Kate a fortune. If you lose,
You two at Ormathwaite can pass your days,
Like me and your Aunt Rachel."

Till that hour
The thought of earning money, and still less
Of wanting it, had never crossed my mind.
A plant self-sowing money seemed to me,
Which grew, and blossomed, and its fruit let fall
Into your open hand, not troubling you
For any culture. To be poor appeared
Beyond the bounds of possibility.
My stock of marks at school was always low,
Yet never failed, so easily they came.
A problem solved in play-time, fifty lines
Of Homer construed, for a week sufficed.
'Twas as the wishing-cap or purse were mine,
Renowned in fairy tales; or magic coin,
Which ever to the owner's hand returned,
So that his life in endless swindling passed.

That Christmas was my last true holiday,

And memorable for a lengthened bout
Of story-telling. Every night we closed
Around the ruddy hearth, our only light,
And then my father called on each in turn
Some tale to tell, himself contributing
Wild bits of mystery, no longer marred
By ending in a laugh. So once he told
How in an unknown sea, a lonely ship,
Storm-driven from her course, was strangely joined
By what a coffin seemed, and held its way
Without or sail or oar, the ship beside,
Veering as she veered, many a weary league,
By daylight dark, translucent in the night,
And showing then within a shape obscure
Which froze the seamen's hearts and sealed their tongues.
So on they sailed together, till at last
Nearing an island in the charts unmarked,
The phantom parted company, and drove
Full on the shore, where rose a rustling sound
As of a crowd that watches some great risk
With breath suspended; and pursued the ship
Far o'er the waves. Such tale, some years before,
Would Kate and me have haunted many days,
And now would bring a silence; during which

From far off in the house might come the voice
Of Alison, crooning the dismal lay—

This ane night, this ane night,
Every night and all;
Fire and fleet and candlelight,
And Christ receive thy soul.

The curate's tales—he often joined the ring—
Came from the Gesta Romanorum. One
Still haunts my memory, of a knight alone
On quest adventurous bent, who found a toad
In combat with a serpent, and with lance
The croaking reptile smote; when night by night
The hideous creature squatted on his breast,
Nor ceased his malice, till the serpent came
And freed his champion. Our good pastor drew
Some moral from the story, now forgot.
Aunt Rachel's tales were family anecdotes;
My own I pass, and Kate's were lively jests
To make us laugh. But midst the merriment,
Cache-Cache in softer accents would begin
Some legend chosen from her Church's stores,
Like that of the good saint, her countrywoman
In Merovingian times, the bishop's wife
Of Clermont, Eutropa; whose wont it was

To robe herself in such humility,
That once while she the painting of a church
Was reverently directing, a poor dame
Gave her a crust of bread, believing her
A sister mendicant. And the good saint
Would have that crust served daily at her board,
The while it lasted, chastening so her pride.
So Cache-Cache told; and then my father, who,
If aunt like story gave, would surely call
The fan into employment, always smiled
On Roland, and his hand would often stretch
To smooth her wavy hair.

But various cares,
Born of her own sweet nature, now employed
The stranger maid. Among the dale-landers
Full many a humble friend might bless the name
Of one who watched their ways, and learnt their needs,
And these relieved without offending those.
Far reached her round of love, including e'en
Sequestered Lancrigg, lying deep behind
The Finsthwaite fells, and reached by path so steep,
And oft in winter dangerous, that the folk
Then stayed from church, and once, the story went,
Missed Sunday altogether, sleeping sound

From night-fall Saturday to Monday's dawn.
Yet at that dreary season, more than once,
Did Cache-Cache cross the hills, and comfort bear
To those secluded homes. And keeping still
Her old retiring habits, she went forth,
Not saying whither, so that no surprise
Her absence caused at home.
Before the end
Of those last holidays, I went to stay
With Caleb Fenwick. Quiet, pleasant people
His family were, who made me quite at home,
But taught me the first boy at Ascham-house
Was not first in the world. To Caleb then
My father's hint I opened. Two whole days
He pondered o'er it, and advised the law.
At Appleby he said he once had heard
A cousin of his own defend a cause,
And sure he was that in our mimic court
My speeches with his cousin's might compare
Before a real judge. His path was fixed;
A parish priest he hoped to live and die,
And school should leave for Oxford. Me, he thought,
And shyly said, the church would scarcely suit,
So he advised the bar. A palace rose

In splendour on my fancy while he spoke.
To rescue injured innocence; to stand
Forth for the people's rights; to gain the shouts
Of listening multitudes; the smiles to win
Of outraged queens—for then such triumphs were—
The chord was struck. Without a post's delay
I wrote my father that my choice was made,
And he approving answered. Midsummer
Should see me cast the chrysalis of school,
And try my pinions in a loftier sphere.
The half-year passed; and leaving with regret
The second home to which so much I owed,
And friendly teachers, back to Ormathwaite
I came, no more a school-boy. I had told
My eighteenth birth-day, and within me worked
The restlessness that expectation breeds.
Not long my father kept me in suspense.
London awaited then the promised birth
Of that new college, whose more liberal rule
Would shame, 'twas boasted, learning's ancient seats
On Cam and Isis. Midst its patrons first
Stood the great jurist, statesman, orator,
Of freedom champion and of knowledge friend,
Whom liberal England loved, and we might hail

With fonder pride as of "our own countrie."
The London University would claim
Me one of its first students.
Months were mine
Ere yet the college opened, months of bliss
From all alloy more free, than any since
Inwoven in my life. School holidays,
Dear though they be, have one disparagement,
Common to earthly joys—they have an end.
Little by little, every passing day,
The end o'erclouds the present, till at last
No blue is left; as travellers northward bound,
While north winds blow, the herbage round them see
Shrivelled by frost beneath a cheerful sky,
And while the sun's still warm, themselves foretaste
The cold to which they journey. Not so when
The end brings change which hope imagines fair;
The traveller climbing then an easy slope,
Enjoys the widening landscape all the more
For thinking of the view beyond the ridge.
Ah, happy they for whom the joys of earth—
Earth in her poorest garb still rich in joys—
Are thus exalted by forethoughts of heaven!
So was it with those pleasant autumn days.

Years had flown by, since I at home had spent
That crowning season; years since I had seen
Our marshes starry with Parnassus grass,
Our bowery dingles rich with clustering nuts,
October's hues upon our woods; our fells
With heather crimson, golden-brown with fern.
Are these things common? Ah, in Arrandale,
More yellow glowed the tresses of the birch,
A ruddier brown arrayed the sturdy oak,
A brighter red the sycamore. For nuts,
Against the world our Arrandale for nuts!
They say when some one Windham asked—Would Pitt
Befriend a bill in aid of public sports?
The fine old English gentleman replied—
"Sir, Pitt was never a boy." Unhappy Pitt!
Give me the bard of Greta, best of men,
Rejoicing through a man's work, nobly done,
To cherish a boy's heart. So nut we would,
E'en without comrades like Roland and Kate
For the spoil to hold their aprons; e'en without
The mountain prospects every glade disclosed
Amidst the nut-bowers, Scawfell's towering peaks,
Blencathra's dark pavilions, or the pair
In stern repose o'er Deepdene brooding. Yes;

Without the words of music that enriched
Each pause from rapine, when we paced along,
Rehearsing what we loved best in the books
We last had read. The mine of Golden Grove
Its wealth had poured on Cache-Cache, and it flowed
Warm from her heart, in all the glorious pomp
The raptured preacher drew.
Then Fenwick came,
Like me from school released, and oft we four,
With Thornie for companion, boating went
On Arranmere, exploring all the nooks
Along its margin; gliding slowly now
Beneath the trees that bend their branches down
To kiss the laughing water; resting now
Out in the middle calm, while all around
The hills and woods were mirrored in the lake,
Making a sphere of landscape, we the centre,
To fancy's eye self-poised. Where several bays
Sombre with trees indent the shore, the grounds,
Now desolate that once a mansion graced
With stately avenues and trim parterres,
Would tempt us to debark, and thread the walks
All green with grass, but lovely in decay.
Or moored beneath the wooded isle where once

His hermitage a lonely saint had made,
Cache-Cache and Kate in some old ballad-strain
Would join their voices; and chance pilgrims then
Upon the lake might deem they heard the choir
Which cheered the anchorite's slumbers. Near the head,
A rocky promontory, crowned with firs,
Offered a resting-place, whence Arrandale
In its best beauty opened. There we spread
Our banquet on the turf; with greater glee
If dear Aunt Rachel and the curate deigned
Our guests to be; when honouring the time,
A pile of dry sticks furnished us with fire,
And we made tea.

My father now began
To talk on higher themes, but keeping still
Freedom of thought his object. Year by year,
The spirit of his youth more fresh returned;
His old enthusiasm glowed anew.
He called back his lost favourites. E'en Rousseau,
I think, was half-forgiven for the dreams
Which led poor France astray, and freedom wrecked.
But now, perhaps my Latin lore to try,
He took up Tacitus, to school unknown,
And revelled in the scathing apothegms

Hurled against despots by that last of Romans;
Musing aloud upon his sad lament
For the long years Domitian's tyranny
Stole from the noon of life; or rolling out
The historian's glorious anger at the pile,
Too oft rekindled since, the funeral pile,
The despot hoped, of learning and the arts.
"Doubtless," he said exulting, "in that fire
They thought to kill the Roman people's voice,
The senate's freedom, and all human lore,
Having expelled each liberal art, and doomed
To exile all the teachers, till in Rome
Nothing of honour anywhere was left.
Truly we gave a mighty proof of patience,
Seeing, as they of old the height of freedom,
So we the depth of thraldom, robbed by spies
Of use of speech and hearing; nay, with speech,
Losing e'en memory, if as easily
As silence keep, we likewise could forget."
So passed that autumn. London ruled my thoughts,
And filled my fancy, as the time drew near
For seeking the great city. From the trees
October's winds were whistling the sere leaves,
And all was fixed. Our doctor sent his son

His art to study at the new-sprung school
A month before me, and he undertook
To find me quarters. Soon the day arrived
To say farewell. My father's last advice
Resembled that Laërtes hears from his,
Good, for this world. He gave me letters too,
To friends of olden time. The curate spoke
With faltering lips some words of higher tone.
Dear aunt was proud and tender. Sister Kate
Left me in haste lest I should see her tears.
Roland her farewell said, for such I deem it,
The previous evening.
We had climbed alone
The wooded bank that Finsthwaite overlooks,
And all the valley with its circling hills
And winding streams commands. In gorgeous pomp
The sun was setting o'er the mountain pass
Of Sparkling Tarn, rose-tinting Scawfell's crags,
While over Arranmere, Blencathra's steeps
Were robed in richest purple. Not a leaf
Stirred in the wood. The stillness of the hour
On us, too, laid its spell, not broken, surely,
When in her low sweet tones, that seemed as 'twere
Nature herself who spoke, Cache-Cache began :—

" Walter, to-morrow for a world unknown
To me, you leave us. Ah, I fear for you ;
For you I fear, as for some dearest friend
Starting to cross a desert unexplored.
But him the sun and stars their light would lend
To show his doubtful way. Your sun and stars
Lie hid in your own bosom, felt, not seen,
Harder to follow than those shining orbs.
No angel, Walter, the good preacher says,
Sits by a man, like nurse by cradled babe,
Its unrest watching, from the little lips
Wafting the lighting fly. No, Walter, yet
A help you have, a help can never fail,
However sore your need. Trust in that help,
Trust in it always, always ; for the love
Of us at Ormathwaite, for Cache-Cache' sake."
And then she rose, and laid her trembling hand
Light on my arm—the touch came often back—
And through the twilight walking slowly home,
Her eyes to mine in stealthy glances raised
I saw were dim with tears. My angel, she.

V.

London.

London! A stirring time was that when I
First saw the mighty city. In men's minds
Were quick the ferment and unrest that give
Presage more sure of coming change, than signs
In earth or sky. Traditions old and grey
Were butts for youthful insolence; to jest
Was turned the "wisdom of our ancestors;"
What profits it?—of each time-hallowed rule
Was asked in scorn. On the unhonoured head
Of Hanover's fourth king the crown was trembling;
All party ties were loosened by the death
Of the Prime Minister who, fifteen years,
Had kept things as they were; all public faith

By "open questions" had been undermined;
The rancorous war with Canning, and the brief
Ignoble reign of his successor, roused
The anger of the country; the great Duke
Forth from his Cabinet had spurned away
The liberal remnant. Yet the rumour ran
That 'neath the Tory rule, the Catholic claims
To justice long denied, to force would fall,
And so the nation would a lesson learn,
Repeated since, nor like to be forgot.
Such stir spreads far, and ruffles oft the calm
In distant wells, where truth has long reposed.
When question once begins, no man can fix
The bounds where it shall stop. You seek a rill,
Your field to water, and a torrent comes,
That sweeps away the landmarks, and leaves dry
No ground to plant your foot.
Such then the time,
When one dim morning, towards October's end,
At Islington's famed Angel, by the mail
I was set down, and through the misty light
Looking around me on the squalid suburb,
Thought with disdain and wonder, could that be
Imperial London? But the people soon

Found me a coach; too drowsy to observe,
I reached my rooms in Gower Street; and there
In dreams renewed my journey. Fleming came,
The doctor's son, to wake me; showed the way
My name to enter on the college rolls;
Engaged me for the evening; and went off,
Pleading a lecture.

Lonely at the gates,
Awhile I stood, unknowing where to turn.
No soul I knew of all the hosts that swarmed
In infinite procession through the streets,
Their hum unceasing, as of Arrandale
The rippling streams, but not as musical.
At hazard wandering on, my wonder grew
To note the utter apathy of all
Who thronged the ways, each to the other's aim.
In Castleton the people turned to gaze
Whene'er a stranger came. In Arrandale
Men always spoke at meeting. No one here
So much as looked at me. I strolled along
Still more forlorn, with yearning vague to reach
The avenue where Thames the city cleaves.
Waterloo Bridge my quest rewarded. There,
The penny paid which kept it still untrod,

I to the middle passed, and turning round,
Saw London.
Fair the day, a south-west breeze
Sweeping away the city's smoky veil
Far to the Essex woods, and leaving clear
Each monument of England's history.
A faded map at home had taught the site
Of every famous pile, and now at once
I knew them all. From Lambeth in the west,
To Rufus' hall, and dark St. Mary's fane;
Whitehall, and by the Strand to Somerset House,
Which faced me; onwards to the Templar's trees,
Thence to St. Paul's, and all the hundred spires
That show what Christian cities were of old;
And midst them the memorial of the fire,
No longer lying; and through crowds of masts,
The grim White Tower, the Tower of London—all
Needed no spokesman. Then upon me stole
The royal city's might, and grew more great,
As through the vista of past centuries,
I saw the deeds of fame that there were done,
And the successive multitudes that swelled
The pomp of time. As grass the days of man,
More marvellous then the work of his poor hands.

Nature herself, cold, changeless, as 'twere dead,—
For to the pair that over Deepdene loomed,
What was the summer's green or winter's white ?—
Dwindled in strength, while there I gazed upon
That mighty sign of man's creative power.
The vision passed; but o'er me still its spell
Held sway, as through the busy streets I sought
My homeward way, enrapt in thoughts then vague,
But oft recurring since in shape more clear.
The days of man are but as grass; mankind
Outlives the trees that raise their giant stems
On Californian heights; and like the tide,
Retiring now as if it left its work,
Returning then to lay another zone
Of soil to guerdon future husbandmen,
When from its bed upheaved the teeming carse
Is lifted from the waters—so mankind,
Though with less order, lays its fabric down,
Material some, some spiritual; then
Withdrawing leaves its work to be entombed
Beneath the next flood's burden, and thus builds
Of mind and hand-work a great treasury,
An after age to enrich. Nothing is lost.
Town rises over town; book follows book;

But still the later to the earlier owes
Some portion of its skill, however far
The knowledge may have travelled ere it comes
Back to its older dwelling. We are told
Each pulse that beats within a baby's veins,
Throbs through the universe; the thought that flashed
Across our Newton's brain thrilled to the bounds
Of the vast system he made known to man;
Throbs there and thrills for ever. Nothing dies.
Each whispered word, each unsaid fancy grows
Part of the energy that resting never,
But calm in its great strength, all nature fills.
For force is indestructible; nor less,
Be sure, of force the noblest token, thought.
Are such reflections impious? Spurn the fear.
Force but a servant is, the master, will.
Our efforts teach us our corporeal strength,
And science shows us how to concentrate,
Release, and guide, the latent might that lurks
In every atom of the inert earth,
Till 'neath our hand a floating city cleaves
The yielding waves, defying wind and tide—
Till rushes forth, invincible, the train,
To mortal ken suggesting best the flight

Of a great comet rushing towards the sun.
Will is the source of all ; nor less ordains
The steady clock that wound up once a month
Measures our daily tasks. 'Tis will alone
That in all these connects the effect and cause.
Then can we think the vast catastrophes
Which awe mankind, the earthquake or the plague,
Are not effects of will ? Or that the beat,
Rhythmic and regular, which through our veins
Impels life's tide, is not sustained by will ?
Can we imagine that the force unseen
Which in their courses holds the rolling stars,
Is not of will the creature ? Will away,
Would not the whole collapse, e'en as the clock,
Neglected, stops ? If force be permanent,
'Tis will that makes it so. Nay, force is will.
Why need we start then, when by science told
That every thought which flashes through the mind,
Some force expends, some change of tissue costs,
Requiring to be balanced, as the man
From earth who springs, from him, too, moves the earth ?
Why need we start, observing further that
This cost of tissue measures not the worth
Of what the effort yields ? The dunce who pores

An hour upon his sum, and leaves it wrong,
Spends as much tissue as the Adams who,
In the same period, calculates the spot
Where must be sought the planet yet unknown,
Required the unequal motion to explain
Of its next neighbour. Let the tissue waste.
'Tis the mere instrument by which the thought
Evolves itself, and robed in fitting signs
Becomes communicable to the world.
The tissue does not think! But if the force
Be indestructible, as surely 'tis,
Much more the thought which it gives forth must live
Through all the ages, though, if worthless, soon
By men forgotten; if not understood,
But yet of price, preserved for that full time,
When brought to light anew, it shall inform
The riper generation. Nothing dies.
The days of man are but as grass; mankind
By empires and by races metes its life,
And each to each bequeaths its legacy
Of lore and wisdom. But the mechanism,
The vast and complex scheme of energy,
Whereby that lore is found, whereby when found,
From man to man, from age to age 'tis made

Communicable, this all-active force,
Whose operations man may analyse,
Interpolating 'twixt effect and cause
New causes and effects, where each is both,
But which, the force itself, he ne'er can grasp—
What is it but the omnipresent will
Of infinite intelligence, that works
With the great universe, as lowly man
Works in the narrow sphere to him consigned,
Trusted himself with will, wherefrom he learns
He, too, a spirit is, a living soul?
Seek the huge factory, where whirring frames,
In number thousand, by one impulse driven,
Spin the light down, designed to waft abroad
The winged seeds that propagate the plant—
There through the whole, is not one will supreme,
Connecting wheel with wheel, apportioning
To every end the needful share of force?
Yet note again; by every separate frame
A watcher stands, entrusted with the power
To stay its motion, should a broken thread
Require uniting, and responsible
For duly exercising his free will.
Comparisons are never wholly true,

And least so those which in man's feeble works
Seek images of God's omnipotence.
Man's liberty of will is greater far
Than the frame-watcher's; his appointed work
More arduous far and noble. But the Will
Which permeates the universe, and moves
The very mechanism whereby man's soul
Informs itself and others like itself—
With this Will, that the factory which built,
May no more be compared, than with the world
May the same factory. Yet as the watcher
Is free to rule his frame, so man is free
To wield the share of power by God bestowed,
And answerable for its due employ.
Again, the factory grew by slow degrees
From the rude wheel which, turned by spinster's hand,
Twined into yarn the wool round distaff wrapped.
No single life sufficed to work the change,
But where one ended, there the next began.
The days of man are but as grass; mankind
Measures its course by victories of skill
Using the faculties bestowed by God.
Yet note once more. While simple spinsters turned
Their wheels in ancient Greece, great Homer sung,

And honour, truth, and love, were prized as now.
The Jewish maiden who the distaff held,
Knew, as we know, the Lord Jehovah's rule,
Justly to deal, and mercy love, and walk
Humbly with God. The earliest martyr died
For the same Christian faith which now is ours.
Mankind may live for ages, but can rise
No higher in genius, virtue, faith, than he
Whose days are but as grass.
So later years
Have moulded the dim thoughts that rapt my mind,
As homewards from the bridge I traced my way.
They still possessed me when to Fleming's rooms,
At night-fall loitering through the lighted streets,
I bent my steps. There several guests I found,
Comrades in his own classes, who received
His friend in arts with greetings boisterous,
Reminding me of school—a jovial crew,
Gathering, they'd say, their roses while they might,
Yet not, as soon I found, without some flights
Of loftier pretension. The early jesting done,
They rushed on metaphysics—tempting web—
Discussing the reality of things
External. Then I first was taught my mind

Saw not the bowl that on the table stood,
But only its impression on the eye;
We did not taste the punch, but merely felt
Its flavour on the palate. Who should say
These feelings or impressions did not spring
Out of the mind itself? If eyes were not,
There would be nought to see; our palates gone,
No flavour would be left. But while they all
Concurred in proving nothing need exist,
None seemed to be convinced. They argued still,
When a new-comer entered, and received
The homage nature always claims for men,
In every sphere, with inborn right to rule.
Such chief was Hardham, quiet and composed,
Older in mind than years, but even in these
Before his fellow-students, with the mien
Of one whom 'tis a privilege to know.
He joined in the discussion, but I thought,
Without concern, just throwing in a word
At intervals, and listening to the rest,
Who still went on to one another proving
Their mutual non-existence, till at last
I was impelled a question to propose.
"But do you," said I, laying firm my hand

Upon the solid table, " do you then
Believe this table does not now exist ? "
" There is no ground," one answered, " to believe it."
" That is no answer," Hardham said ; " you're asked,
What you believe."
Some questions ne'er obtain
Direct reply. Mine turned the course of talk,
Which now flowed free and fast. Hilarity
Became once more the order of the night.
I slipped away ; but Hardham following me
Before I left the house, we walked together.
Something, my country ignorance perhaps,
Attracted my companion, who proposed
A walk for the next day. Of course I promised.
This is no journal. I in memory seek
The incidents which swayed my early thoughts,
Not those which filled my life. I pass the friends
My father's letters found me, friends of his
In years long gone, when he a traveller was,
Never quite lost, and sometimes seen of late
At Ormathwaite. Their favour smoothed my way
Into a social circle fitted well
To breed distaste for all that coarser round
Which some call life in London. But my friend

Was Hardham. Eagerly I sought the place
Fixed for our meeting, and he led me forth
To Regent's Park. I longed to question him
Respecting that debate without an end.
Passing the Colosseum, he proposed
To enter; I should learn of London more
From the great picture than from Paul's itself.
'Twas so in truth; but vast as seemed the view,
It woke no awe like that which on the bridge
So thrilled my spirit. Yet again it turned
My mind to that debate; for perfect art
Should nature simulate so truthfully,
That sight alone should fail to separate
The semblance from the substance. So a bird
Had pecked at painted grapes. As forth we passed,
I asked of Hardham how he really viewed
The question raised at Fleming's.
"What's the use,"
He answered carelessly, "to think at all
On such an aimless theme? No dreams for me.
My mark is physiology—what's yours?"
But I was dumb, and noting my surprise,
He added:—"Don't you see the argument
Can lead to no result? Suppose I asked

My friends to fill their glasses from the bowl
Within the mirror seen, would they not be
As wrath as Jack and Martin at the feast
Prepared for them by Peter? 'Tis no answer,
But proves the question futile. Practical
Am I, and stand by physiology."
"Yet that," I said, "the science is of life."
He glanced into my face. "And life it is,
You'd say, that feels and sees. On yonder pool
The sky is painted just as on our eye,
But we ne'er think the water sees the clouds.
How can you tell? How know where life begins
Or where it ends? In the wide universe
You are no more than is the tiniest being,
And such there are, that makes its home within
A hair upon your head. Then how can you
Set bounds to life?"
Then on we walked
Some way in silence, till at length my friend
Began to show forth all the excellence
Of his adopted study. Out, he said,
With these unreal phantoms. Not correct
Was I in deeming physiology
The science of life; its proper object was

Organization. Life we could not hold,
But physiology with substance dealt.
She only rested on experiment,
The microscope her constant witness. She
The sting might follow up one set of nerves,
The start trace down another; might abridge
The space wherein the different actions met;
Observe she might the requisites of life.
But life itself, what 'twas, or how, or whence,
She knew not, cared not. The Promethean fire
She left to poets. Frankenstein's grim slave
Was just as truthlike as Pygmalion's bride.
And once more Hardham asked my favourite aim.
I told him mathematics.

"So your love
Of argument might teach me. But the maze
Of x and y no more than trains the mind.
My heart is set to win a great success.
Now physiology will neither make
A surgeon nor physician. I work hard
At studies I detest."

He did not add—

And so must you. Nor had I heeded him,
Amidst the prospects opening on my view.

His mental apathy surprised me more
Than had the questioning he tossed aside.
To doubt the senses seemed the height of doubt,
But not to heed such doubt, seemed not to care
For truth itself. Some wandering thoughts I had
These speculations closely touched the faith
I still imagined mine. Much we had talked
Of life and mind—abstractions—but the soul,
That lived and reasoned, this was never named.
I felt like one with hand outstretched to draw
A curtain whose uplifting, he well knows,
Will show him things he never may forget,
But whether good or ill, of joy or woe,
He cannot tell, yet longs to try the chance.
  Little availed my lectures to distract
My mind from these temptations. I but seemed
To enter a new school. None, says Rousseau,
The cynic, childhood view so slightingly
As those who just have left its littleness.
Few of my class-mates were so old as I;
Not "men" but boys they were, and lived at home.
No corporate interest bound us one to one,
Collegians but in name. In Castleton
A power was Ascham-house—in London what,

What was the London University?
So wrote I to my father, and sought friends
'Mong Hardham's chosen comrades—chosen for
Zeal like his own to make the most of time.
To him one day I told my discontent.
"Medals and prizes occupy your thoughts,"
He answered smiling—"worthless idols they!
To knowledge needless, without knowledge lies.
Learn all you can, and spurn the tawdry honours.
Would I were free as you." Alas, there lacked
That beaten road, at learning's older schools
Prescribed to save the student's toil—that road,
Not lovely, perhaps, itself, but right and left
Bordered by fields and orchards, ever rich
With flowers and fruits, and opening transient views
Of landscapes glorious, which the traveller trusts
To explore at leisure, when his training's o'er.
We were but pioneers, and felt our way;
Freshmen, without our sophs and questionists.
The college library an endless store
Of wealth presented to the student's gaze,
But lured him to unthrift. I ranged at will
Amidst that magic realm in aimless mood,
Devouring many books, digesting none,

But in my letters home portraying each
New admiration. I remember now,
Though heedless then, how Cache-Cache answered me,
Gently reproving my inconstancy,
With tact that made each faithful warning seem
A whisper of my own.
No hearing then
The cautions found. The wanderer who first
Launches his boat upon an unknown stream,
And down the current glides, hearing below
The roar proclaiming a great cataract,
May note the quickening water, and attain
The shore in time. But he who launches forth
On speculation's flood, no sign receives,
And finds no haven. He must dare the fall
Whence few escape. Had Hardham? None could tell.
But he, like many, looked upon the risk
As one that must be run, and afterwards
Is worth no retrospect. He shunned the themes
His comrades loved, such as the conflict old
Between foreknowledge and free will; and when
I asked his own opinion, said—"Read Hume."
I read, and still more puzzled, asked anew.
"Threlkeld," he answered, "if I ever feel

My will not free, I then may fret myself
About necessity. But why assume,
Undoomed, the task of Sisyphus ? "
'Tis true.
No logic ever vanquished consciousness ;
But up the hill of argument you strain,
And at the summit feel no more convinced
Than when your toil began. Then why begin ?
Ask the first woman why she ate the fruit
Of the forbidden tree. Your case is worse,
For you learn nothing, and may unlearn much.
With spring came turmoil new. In Parliament
The first great schism exploded, and the land
Was wild with passion. Here, intolerance,
Grasping, as is its wont, the bolts of heaven,
Foretold God's vengeance on the race that bowed
The knee to Antichrist. More calmly, there,
The men who long in opposition's shade,
Had waged the holy war of liberty,
Exulted in their triumph, and foresaw
Their own reward at hand. Between them stood
The patriot statesman, doomed to win renown
By shaming his past life. I made my way
At times to the strangers' gallery, and heard

The turbulent discussions—heard the chief
Driven back from point to point, to take his stand
On right and justice through long years denied.
What judgment then was sound, conviction safe?
What faith was sure? And in the whirl of change,
Less care was mine, perhaps, for some old truths
Insensibly now slipping from my grasp,
If not quite lost.

Even at first I thought
Going to church in London, as I went,
A curious process. Public worship craves
A social spirit in the worshippers.
Your neighbours and your minister to know,
To go with kinsfolk, schoolfellows, or friends,
To see familiar faces beaming round,
To hear familiar voices answering,
To know for whom the special prayer is said,
For whom the thanks are rendered—nay, to share
The kindly greetings, e'en to note the robes
Kept trim to honour Sunday—all combine
To make us feel how pleasant is the house,
To make us glad to go. How strange to ask,
Where shall I go to-day! to enter midst
A throng of strangers! to request a seat,

And sometimes pay for it! No parish mine,
Stranger and sojourner in the vast town—
One had to choose, and did. So worship grew
A mode of sight-seeing. Now one went to hear
A famous preacher, now a famous choir;
An organ here, an opera-singer there.
On Hardham's arm, in Westminster's dim aisles
Or 'neath St. Paul's grand dome, I joined the crowd,
Who met to hear, not pray. In Warwick Street
The prima donna who the "Gloria" led,
Ravished our ears. We stood in the hot press
At Regent Square, and heard the orator
With prophet's mien and fire invoking wrath
On those who then were loosing Babylon.
Oh, for the rustic strains of Arrandale,
And Morton's wailing tones and fervent words!
Oh, for the presence compassing me round,
When down the coom of Glaramara swept
The hurtling storm, and sang its dithyramb
Amidst those hollies old!
My childhood's trust
Was fading from my mind so silently,
That scarce I felt the loss, though troubled much
For something to replace it, dreary doubt

Repose forbidding. Suddenly one day
I asked of Hardham, what did he believe.
"I might reply," he said, with curious smile,
"With Molière's 'Don Juan,' I believe
That two and two make four; four and four, eight.
You start, but that is not my own reply.
Yours is a question I ne'er ask nor answer."
The wit when in a casual circle asked,
What might be his religion—answered quick,
"Mine's the religion of all men of sense;"
And being questioned further—what was that?
Said—"Men of sense ne'er tell." A fit rebuke
To rude inquiry. Hardham's gentler was,
And on my murmuring some weak complaint
Touching the precipice on which I stood,
With mists surrounded—"Threlkeld," he replied,
"Until you know the doubts of other men,
You have no certainty in your own faith.
This is the penalty of intellect,
In ignorance it cannot rest secure.
Yet never fear, for doubt's the road to truth."
Ah, but a road which he who follows needs
The help by Cache-Cache shadowed, when she laid
Her hand upon my arm our farewell night;

The help bespoken in that humblest prayer—
Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.
The touch was on my arm, but on my lips
The prayer was not. My friend perceived, I think,
The gloom I felt, and spoke again with less
Of scornful nonchalance :—" Nay, Threlkeld, I,
I, too, in mathematics have indulged—
A preface by Lagrange I've read, wherein
Piloting students through their scepticism,
He writes—Go forward ; faith will come to you.
I say the same. The men who think are few
That know not Doubting Castle. Through the fire
Lies readiest rescue—have you read Rousseau ? "
His words recalled that distant incident,
How Kate and I were reading of the castle,
When Morton split the lemon. So I smiled,
And told my friend the story. He, too, smiled ;
And then a livelier turn our converse took,
More fitting for the scene. For then we strolled,
One sweet May evening, through the Shepherd's Fields
Between West-end and Hampstead, nightingales
In hope to hear, a novelty for me,
As in our dales there are none. And ere long
From midst the crimson glory of a thorn

In neighbouring pleasure-grounds, broke forth the song,
Clear, liquid, jubilant, the evening song
For which we listened, banishing all thoughts
At discord with the calmness of the time.
  But none the less I laboured through Emile,
And Savoy pastor's creed, and felt the power
Which, shown in other spheres, has wiled a crowd,
In thraldom bred, to deem themselves born kings.
Rousseau's reliance on man's noble nature
Lulls you in pride to sleep, and screens from sight
The sordid lures, the base and vulgar arts
By which the flatterer thinks to train and guide
That noble nature. Willingly you choose
The bright side of his paradox. You loathe
His selfish meanness, spurn his social plan,
But rest complacent in some misty dream
Of abstract virtue's splendour, and the power
Self-governing of conscience and the heart.
Such treacherous rest was mine, and lapped me long.
  So spring-time passed. A school-boy once again,
The days I counted that from Ormathwaite
Still kept me exiled. Home upon me smiled,
And beckoned from afar, with nought to chill
The promised welcome. Prizes I had none,

But that, I knew, my father would not heed.
Aunt Rachel and dear Kate, and all home joys
No less I loved for London's garish life,
But only more. And for Roland—not yet
Myself I knew how much I loved Roland.

VI.

Cambridge.

I LEFT the coach upon that airy height
Where first the tourist hails the view complete
Of Arranmere embosomed in its hills,
And traces through their folds our narrow dale
Winding to Gable and the sovereign Pikes.
Thence through the woods a path abridged my way,
And soon I revelled in my welcome home.
At once my father gladdened me with news
Of change long wished in silence. He had weighed
My views of college, and now gave me choice
To move to Cambridge for the coming year.
"You'll find your equals there, at least in age,"
He said, and smiled. The sarcasm passed unfelt
Amidst the pleasure by the prospect given.

Our ancient ways and walks we then resumed;
And wandering through the glades of Wandale wood,
Or 'neath the enchanted yews old times recalling,
With Kate and Cache-Cache, more each day I felt
Of that deceitful peace which now was mine.
Rehearsing turn by turn some favourite lines
Of verse or prose, Roland anew displayed
The love she bore our English Chrysostom;
And from her lips the golden sentences
Might soothe a spirit troubled more than mine.
If what we ask for daily, once she said,
We passionately loved, we then should ask
With hearty wishes, earnest appetite,
And with a present spirit; and although
Easy it be for thought to wander, yet
'Tis but lukewarmness and indifference
Makes it so natural. You shall observe
That so long as the light shines clear, and fires
Of warm devotion and desires flame out,
So long the mind stands to the altar close,
And waits upon the sacrifice. But as
The fires die out and the desires decay,
Then steals away the mind, and walks abroad
To see the little images of joy

And beauty which it finds in the falling stars
And tiny glow-worms of the world. The river
That by its banks runs slow and creeps, and begs
Leave of each turf to pass, is drawn aside
To little hollows, spends itself in rills,
And with diversion dies. But when it runs
With vigour and an ample stream, and breaks
Through all obstructions, level making them
With its own brow, it stays not to be lured
By small vocations, or in holes to creep,
But flows into the sea through channels full
And generous. So 'tis with a man's prayer.
Moving on feet of sated appetite,
In company with every incident
It turns aside, at fancy's corners stays,
Talks with each thing it meets, and ne'er arrives
At heaven. But when 'tis borne upon the wings
Of strong desire and passion, with quick flight
And hungry appetite, it makes its way
Through all the intermedial realm of clouds,
And stays not till it dwells before the throne
Where mercy sits, and holy showers of grace
Therefrom sends down.

Inspiring words!

But less their lofty aim I valued then
Than their mere eloquence, and those sweet tones
In which they flowed from Roland's gentle lips—
The falling stars and glow-worms of the world.
Soon my old school-mate, Fenwick, came to stay
Awhile at Ormathwaite. We had maintained
A close exchange of letters, and at times
I asked him questions similar to those
Which Hardham waved so loftily aside.
A different spirit breathed in his replies,
But led to the same end. Beyond the scope
Of human reason, reverently he wrote,
Such problems lay, insoluble by man,
And so not meant for human argument.
Should the thing formed say unto him that formed it,
Why hast thou made me thus? And earnestly
Did Fenwick pray me not to risk my steps
On ground forbidden, nor my soul to vex
With doubtful disputations. Ah, but who,
Who can so crush the questionings that spring
Out of his very nature? Who can quell
The passionate thirst to see beyond the glass
That darkens here our view? Is the hope vain?
Insoluble the problem? Who can tell,

Who own his feebleness, until himself
Has searched and failed? And then? There lies the risk.
If failure teaches that the way was wrong,
And turns the soul to humbleness and faith,
Well for the searcher then. More sure he walks,
More strongly armed against the foes of truth,
More unconcerned at every seeming knot
By science tied or history, than he
Who never in the pilgrim's castle lay
An anguished prisoner. Doubt is not all loss,
And only arrogance can deem it sin,
Such arrogance as good Augustine says
Might make us deem the Holy Spirit spoke.
But if in apathy the failure end?
Then let us hope the natural piety
Which Bacon mentions may direct the soul,
At least to outward virtue.

Passages

'Twixt Fenwick and my sister now befell,
Which made me smile. A reel of cotton dropped
Produced a scene to grace a comedy.
So, too, when Caleb offered Kate his hand
To pass the Finsthwaite stepping-stones, which she
Had tripped across unaided from a child,

A glance, half-arch, half-shy, would let me know
That my dear Kate had conquered her old spite
Against my comrade's name. Her prophecy
Was coming true in part. In part? you ask—
Ah, linger o'er the hours, the rosiest time
Of rosy youth, when love is in your heart,
But has not passed your lips, and yet you know
Has won its guerdon. Linger o'er the time,
When you must seek your opportunities,
Not find them made by others. Keep your joy
A secret treasure 'twixt yourself and her,
Untroubled by the conscious ministry
Of sympathizing friends. The day drew near
When for the busy life of Trinity
I must exchange this sweet companionship,
Leaving our woods and mountains for the plains
Of treeless, level Granta. Not e'en then
Did my heart's yearning shape itself in words.
  Who now will recollect the "Rising Sun,"
That sober old stage-coach which thrice a week
From Birmingham to Cambridge made its tour,
A long day's journey? At Northampton I
Its outsides joined, and by Cromwell's town
Was borne to my new nursing-mother's arms.

Night fell before we entered. One brief glimpse
Of Magdalen's humble front was all I saw
Of learning's homes. But early the next morn
Through Trinity's great gates I found my way,
Traversed the ample courts, and from the bridge
O'er lazy Cam, surveyed the long array
Of stately palaces that grace the stream,
Each with its bridge and academic grove.
A marvellous change, indeed, from Gower Street!
The college there was in the city lost,
The college here, the city's life and soul.
I sought at once the tutor of my side,
A man of jovial air and affable,
Whose welcome banished strangeness. Briefly he
Explained my duties, and assigned me rooms
Within the walls, an airy residence
Reached by a winding stair. There soon installed,
I felt the honour of a householder.
The lonely chambers typified my life.
No friend was mine in all the blue-gowned throng
I met at chapel, lecture, or in hall.
Our college etiquette has added jests
To the old score against Scholasticus,
But has its social use, nor troubles those

Who come in groups from England's noble schools.
But I was lonely. Day by day I met
The same companions, yet the ice ne'er broke
Of formal courtesy. My London life
Seemed like a barrier raised 'twixt school and college,
Breaking the student's seasons, parting spring
From summer. In return, no lure disturbed
My reading as men read who seek to win
High academic honours; and I learnt
The force of work, the strength it owns and gives,
The living power of knowledge.
Thus absorbed,
In stern realities, no more my mind
Pursued the fruitless chase of paradox,
But settled in indifference, though once
To some brief wonder roused. No test perplexed
The student entering Cambridge; not for him
The "Thirty-nine" were "forty if you wish;"
No statement of church-membership he signed.
To wear a surplice and be "pricked" at chapel
The rules required him; then his course was free
The senior-wrangler of his year to rank,
Though not, as now, to write himself B.A.
But once a term there was communion,

And with surprise I heard our tutor say
That no one was required to join the rite,
Because our creeds were not considered known.
Strange contradiction! to myself I thought,
Know nothing of our faith, yet see us daily
Mustered in chapel! What, was chapel then
Only a roll-call, merely a parade?
What satire on all forced observances!
But though surprised from such a source to hear
So strange a lesson, it agreed so well
With my own mood, that after writing it
Home to my father, I just laid it by
With London church-going.

Christmas I
Kept in my solitude at college. Few
Companions of my year remained beside,
But with some royalty the feast was held.
In hall the old oak tables groaned beneath
Great chines and turkeys, and when grace was said,
Awhile we stood around the open hearth
With glowing charcoal filled, and quaffed deep draughts
Of Trinity's famed "audit" from huge cups
Of solid silver. Then some words I drew

From my shy comrades; but we soon dispersed
To be again as if we ne'er had met.
Deep in my mathematics I was plunged—
Our tutor saw my zeal, and aided it
With counsels out of lecture. Not to me
The abstract symbols were a stumbling-block.
At school with ease my fealty I transferred
From numerals to letters; numbers then
To pure dimension readily gave place,
And soon I mastered Napier's mystic craft,
Reducing computation to the rules
Of plain arithmetic. The subtleties
Of ratio ne'er perplexed me, heralding
The mighty law of limits—master-key
To nature's mysteries. That sign deformed,
But potent necromancer, the square root
Of minus one, impossible existence,
Bowed to my spell, and did my bidding like
The servants of the Lamp. And if by man
The magic art is ever realized,
'Tis when from rows of cabalistic signs
The wished result emerges, and you start
Back from your desk, exulting, clap your hands,
And rival the old Greek's enthusiasm,

When from his bath he sprang, and through the streets
Of Syracuse ran shouting—It is found.
For, see your work. You follow with your pen
One of the countless orbs then shining clear
High in the frosty sky, along its path,
Telling its nights and days, predicting sure
Through ages its career. Or, wondrous more,
From out the depths of that blue firmament,
A world by mortal eye ne'er yet beheld
You summon into light; in all the lands
Direct the telescopes, and add at last
The crowning star to Newton's glorious wreath.
But toilsome days and sleepless nights it needs
To win these triumphs. Like an alchemist,
Watching of old beside his crucible,
Must he, too, labour who would share the fame
An Adams or Leverrier achieves.
Rare are such victories. But in less degree
Each step brings like excitement, and at night
Flushed with the conquest of some problem hard,
The wind I welcomed wailing round my rooms,
And winding down the stair, the cloisters sought
To cool my fevered fancy.

So time passed,

Until the long vacation—only long
To those who count but not enjoy the days—
Scattered the student host. To Sidmouth I,
With a small reading-party, bent my steps,
And ended so my solitary life.
Seven pupils we, all emulous for fame,
Though not disdaining pleasure. Friends we grew,
Long to remember that glad summer time
At Devon's best of bays. A time, indeed,
That no one could forget, for great events,
Events tremendous through all history,
Were happening in the world. In June befell
The long-expected transfer of the crown,
And to their shires and boroughs back were sent
The members faithless to their pledges given
Against the Catholics. The wound was green,
And swelled the rising clamour for Reform,
Which now, wherever men together met
Throughout the land, found eager utterance,
And in one overpowering shout broke forth,
When in July all Paris sprang to arms
And drove anew the Bourbons from their realm.
The love for freedom wheresoever found,
Which hails a fort in every English house,

A garrison in every market-place,
Thrilled jubilant and quick from town to town,
And lent new ardour to the people's will
To gain the Commons their due mastery
Among the realm's Estates.
Not mine the heart,
Then warm in youth, unmoved to feel the spur
Of such uprising. Smile I can to-day
At boyhood's dreams, yet were they generous dreams,
And only erred in showing men too wise,
And governments too potent. All was bright,
And worthless seemed each augury of ill.
Rumours from far parts came of discontent
In riot breaking forth; of that old war
Against machines which multiply men's strength;
Of that blind rage which gives their food to flame.
They were but symptoms of a feverish hour
That soon would pass. Long hoped and long deferred,
But now at last at hand, the liberal rule
With peace and plenty all the land would bless,
And make the people free in fact as name.
Filled with these thoughts to Ormathwaite I went
To close my holidays. My father seemed
As sanguine of the future as myself;

And overlooking all the dreary blight
Which chilled his youthful hopes, he called to mind
The previous time when France first broke her chains,
And played millenniums, while the angels stood
Ready to pour their vials on her head.
'Twas strange to find in our sequestered dale
The echoes of the turmoil. Our dear aunt
Revived her memories of the white cockade,
And murmured low the ditties that bewailed
Another "royal Charlie." Kate—ah, Kate
Now knew an interest that might scorn to care
For kings or kingdoms. Had not Fenwick told,
After some questions shyly asked of me
And answered to his hoping—told that tale
For ever new, though known to every pair
By love united, since the morning stars
Sang the first marriage anthem? Privileged
To walk serene above all worldly coil
Through the brief season left of maidenhood,
Was sister Kate. But Cache-Cache, less enthralled,
Though English more than French by this time grown,
Exulted in her country's liberty,
E'en while with her strange insight she appeared
Clouds to forecast upon the sunny sky.

So sauntering by my side one mellow eve
Of ripe October, through the fading bowers
Of Wandale wood, she robed her fears and hopes
In symbols by her favourite preacher lent.
"So have I seen," she murmured low, "a lark
Rise from its bed of grass, and upwards soar,
Singing the while it rises, borne by hope
To reach to heaven, and climb above the clouds.
But with loud sighings of an eastern wind
Back was the poor bird beaten, and its flight
Made fitful and inconstant, losing more
At each breath of the tempest, than it gained
By toil and frequent weighing of its wings;
Until the little creature lighted down
To rest and pant, and wait the storm's decline.
And then in prosperous flight it rose, and sang,
Music and motion as though it had learnt
E'en from an angel passing through the air
About his ministerings here below."
Alas, the lark still pants upon the grass—
When will the storm be over? When be heard
The angel's song? Not then such thoughts were mine.
"Cache-Cache," I said, "my Cache-Cache, 'tis a time
Of noble yearnings and of lofty deeds.

Mine are the yearnings; mine shall be the deeds.
Oh, be the angel that shall guide my steps,
The meed of my ambition, the dear hope
To bear me onwards to my end unscathed.
Watch lest I wander; hold me lest I fall;
Oh, be my own—my love—'
But not again
The maiden spoke to me. She bowed her head,
Then looked up suddenly into my face
With flushed cheeks and dim eyes. And to my heart
I folded her, my own, through life—through life.

VII.

Troops of Friends.

But Alma Mater called her children back
From holiday to work. I told my father
Roland had promised to become my wife,
And warmly then he shook me by the hand,
And bade me to deserve her. Little need
Did my presumption own for such behest.
To Cambridge I returned to find myself
No more unknown. The college class-list showed
My strength in mathematics, marking me
For one who in the tripos of his year—
Ah, vanity of vanities! would shine.
My hermit days were over. All the friends
Of pleasant Sidmouth, and their friends besides,
Came flocking round me, and the circle grew

Till every concourse rippled o'er with smiles.
Ah, far and wide those friends are scattered now;
Of some the places know them now no more.
Long lost is Skipton, brilliant, gay, and deep,
A college Crichton, who at everything
Flew in the ring, and everything did well.
A trusty oar in dame Minerva's boat,
A skilful hand at billiards and at whist,
At cricket famed alike to bat or bowl,
In Greek who barely missed the Porson prize,
Who 'mong the wranglers all but senior stood—
One of those buoyant spirits that upborne
By sunny heart and sanguine temper crowd
A long life in few years; then leave to mourn
The host of friends their generous ardour won.
A man of different temper was Farquhar—
Choice in his friendships, 'neath a mien reserved
Veiling high thoughts and deep enthusiasm,
Heedful of college tasks, but cherishing
Far loftier aims; accepting college honours,
Not working for them; of the passing hour
Losing no fact, but looking far beyond;
Lord of himself, with deference for all.
No man, they say, before his lacquey's great,

But a great man the world his lacquey finds,
And from the unequal sympathy retires.
For not that holiday enthusiasm
I speak of now which lavishes its wealth
In social mirth and playground leadership,
Or fires the hero of the battle-field,
Or of the bar or senate makes a chief,
But of the impulse nobler and more deep,
The gift divine without which no man's great,
And which still lives, when he who owned it, dies.
With birdlike glee I sprang into the whirl
Of Cambridge life—a captive newly loosed
From bonds of solitude; a novice free
From the noviciate's inexperience.
And still the public ferment through the land
Leavened all social converse, forcing men
Against their will to rank as partisans.
From the great chieftain of the government
The peremptory mandate had gone forth,
There should be no Reform, but those dim ghosts,
Hight Gatton and Old Sarum, still should squeak
And gibber in their grave-clothes. North and south,
And east and west, the nation's answer came
In many-voiced defiance. Midst the din,

In drear November the new Parliament
Met for its work, and on its rolls at once
The people's champion, Yorkshire's member now,
His promised motion placed. The way was clear
To victory, but prudent in retreat
As daring in attack, the warrior chief
Defeat accepted on the civil list—
The Whigs were called to power.
Oh, the debates
Which shook our Union, that school renowned
Where embryo statesmen first their voices hear,
Foretasting senatorial triumphs! Oh,
Of youthful arrogance the rash tirades,
The savage diatribes of youthful rage,
The thrilling cheers of youthful sympathy—
What rapturous hours were those! Ay, e'en to me,
Who heard in Parliament the hot debates
On Catholic relief, what glowing hours!
Meanwhile sedition, ignorant and blind,
Through rural England stalked. The peasantry
Rehoisted Cade's old standard; on the roads
Patroles of cavalry kept watch and ward;
Coaches were stopped and plundered in broad day;
"Swing," shadowy terror, sent his threatening scrolls

To colleges and halls. We were desired
To rank ourselves in squadrons, armed with staves.
I served in Captain Skipton's company.
And, worst of all, night after night the sky
Some flaming homestead lighted, and the alarm
Rang from St. Mary's tower, and fast away
The never-resting engines galloped out,
To save the food the people clamoured for,
Yet in their rage destroyed. Such was the night
When, leaving chapel, o'er the hall we saw
The ruddy signal glare, bespeaking fire
More near at hand. Then rushed we through the screens,
And from the cloisters judging of the scene,
Scurried across the fields to Coton. Ricks,
More than a score, the harvest of the year,
In furious conflagration blazed,
Imperilling the farm; and round about,
Sullen and gloomy, glowered the country-folk,
Stretching no hand to help, while here and there
Sat on his horse a trooper, his drawn sword
Red gleaming to the flames. Our part it was
To work the engines, or in lengthened lines
To hand the buckets from a neighbouring pool.
A feverish time indeed, that held the mind

Intent on rumours, and lent fitful zest
To every call of duty or of sport.
The restlessness found ample vent among
My widening ring of friends. All things to all,
I left my books to join a jovial crew
Around the famed milk-punch, ne'er seen elsewhere,
Which tempted students then—Or now to play
Vingt-un exciting or more tranquil whist,
The latter learnt at home since I was raised
The dumby's place to fill that made the fourth,
My father's partner 'gainst dear aunt and Morton—
Or in the morning down to Chesterton
To pull with Skipton, and a lesson take
In the great game of billiards—Or, more bold,
At Milton feast to dare the churlishness
Of angry rustics. Rapid is the march
Of him who enters this unruly course.
  Nor ended there the new-born turbulence;
The mind, more dangerous rebel, bore its part.
'Mong Skipton's reading friends I found were rife
The questions raised so oft at Hardham's rooms,
Fathomless still in depth, but here explored
More reverently, with truer zeal for truth,
And less mere vanity. My ancient doubts,

So long in slumber laid, to new life woke,
Nay, to more vigorous life than erst they knew.
Oh, truly says the Roman sage's friend—
Evil and impious is the habitude
Of arguing 'gainst the gods, or be it used
In earnest truth-seeking or vain conceit;
And righteously the poet of our lakes
The scoffer brands, for others who bedims
The glorious light too pure for his own eyes!
Who knows where he will stop, or how recall
The word that in a comrade's breast lays seed
Of future woe, though little heeded now?
Left wisely free, men still are more observed
At college than they think. One day I met
Our tutor in the cloisters. Stopping me—
"Reading now, Threlkeld?" in his cordial way
He asked, and ere I answered, added quick—
"I'll tell you of a book I'd counsel you
To read—the Bible"—then departed straight,
Leaving me mute. The shock might pass away,
The incident be mentioned half in jest,
But oft to memory would the warning rise,
And bid me listen, willingly or no.
Still through this riot, thoughts of Ormathwaite,

And her who should be mine, o'er-ruled my life,
And shielded it from harm. Ah, pity him,
For whom, when holidays come round, no home
Opens its doors, no loving welcome waits
From mother, sister, proud of his good name,
But he must fare alone, and seek the rest
His labours crave, a silent wanderer
By lake and mountain, no one near to tell
Merely how fair they are—yes, pity him—
Whom no one cares for, cares not for himself.
Not mine such plea. Nor midst the college whirl
Were calmer hours unknown. 'Twas then the time
When in two camps, like Pope and Emperor,
Byron and Wordsworth parted Granta's sons,
And even Isis sent an embassy
Within our Union to maintain the right.
The time it was when Coleridge, honoured long
By chosen votaries, spread his sway abroad
Over the realm of reason, and impelled
Inquiring spirits on a line of thought
Might lead explorers farther than they meant.
It was the time when fair abstractions came,
The true, the good, the beautiful, and raised
Old realistic ghosts. And many a night,

In my high turret-chambers, with the oak
Sported against intrusion, and close drawn
The curtains lest the light should contradict
That well-known signal, did Farquhar and I
These themes discuss, but chiefly poetry;
Each with his book in hand, now reading out
Some favourite lines, now turning o'er the leaves
In silent commune with the bard beloved.
Golden such pauses. Then the wind would come
Whispering round the tower, and lull to sleep
All argument, our fancy on its wings
Wafting where'er it listed. Or, at times,
As in my lonely days, we later sought
The dimly-lighted cloisters, and there paced
Beneath the long arcade, from whence we saw
The river in the fitful moonshine white,
The limes slow swaying to the midnight breeze,
And wandered mentally in the far-off land.
Vainly may reason strive to quell the sense
Of spirit life; the winds, the sea, the sky
Convict the rebel, with no speech nor language,
But with a voice she cannot choose but hear.

VIII.

Wreck.

So far the nothingness which supervenes
When from his mind a man by logic drives
All he cannot explain, small trouble brought;
And if a difference it raised between
My comrades and myself, the gain seemed mine
Who owned no guide but reason. Tolerance,
Growing more large, as wiser grows the world,
Ceases to punish mere opinion. Men
Revolt by instinct from the high belief
That error is itself a sign of doom;
And trust with Bacon in the natural power
Of piety and virtue. Yet the more
The question's tried, the harder 'tis to solve
What Hallam terms the problem delicate,

How far sincerity avails to excuse
Material error—problem, in good truth,
So delicate, so tending to extremes,
The inquirer scarce will find a resting place
Betwixt avowing total ignorance,
And following the persecutor's call.
And howsoe'er these ends might be confused
In the first travail of the great Reform,
The former claims the Protestant's assent,
The latter shows the Catholic his task.
But not by logic men their duty mete,
Nor will for mere consistency be led
To burn or torture, though in milder guise
Some still are prone to play Inquisitor.
So heresy—a Greek word meaning "choice,"
To-day need fear no pains nor penalties,
Save where a lettered mob can countenance
Each other's bigotry, and make their creed
The test of Greek or Sanskrit; or where laws,
Which should be obsolete, are called to life
By over-busy zealots.
Thought is free;
Yet hushed in its still cave there sleeps a breeze
Ready the peace to ruffle which becalms

The man who thinks not as his brother men.
'Tis notable the pioneers of doubt
Have seldom known the faith of earthly love.
Spinosa, Hobbes, Hume, Gibbon, and Voltaire
Loved not at all, or unrequited loved,
And died unwedded. In my restless hours,
And more in quiet evenings with Farquhar,
Wistful my thoughts to Arrandale would turn,
Weary of college turmoil. Christmas would,
So it was fixed, restore me to my home,
And for its coming I began to yearn
With that peculiar eagerness which feels
Almost like fear. A trustless staff is fate,
Fit but for slaves; and never satisfies
The free-winged spirit's instincts, only linking
A chain of accidents together, where
Man's heart requires a system and a help—
Such help as Cache-Cache bade me always trust.
Love must be lost in company with faith,
And interest all absorbed in self, before
The sceptic feels from apprehension free.
There was no cause, no reason to forebode
Ill tidings now, more than at any time
Of home-going; yet did the daily post

Become a dread, and every letter's seal
I almost feared to break, though that dear hand
Had written the address.
Nothing befell
To warrant these misgivings, ere the time
Of starting came. My "exeat" I obtained,
And at the Master's Lodge my farewell wrote,
Rejoiced to think the fancied perils past.
With fellow-students freighted was the coach,
All bent on errands happy as my own;
And as we rolled along the frost-bound road,
Squad after squad encountering of dragoons,
I smiled to think a mob indeed were that
We could not manage with our own right hands,
Nor want those sabred guardians. Idle boast!
Nought broke the stern repose of winter. Snow
Spread its cold winding-sheet upon the fields,
And all the sky the dull grey aspect wore,
Bespeaking long hard weather.
On the hill
O'er Arranmere I lighted from the stage
To trace the well-known foot-path through the woods;
And there while still I stood to gaze upon
The white-robed silent landscape, and to watch

The coach pursue its perilous descent
Adown the steep and icy road—a pang,
A sudden pang of shivering doubt and fear,
Crowding all previous presages in one,
Shot through my heart. It was as though I saw
A barrier raised 'twixt Cache-Cache and myself,
Forbidding us to meet as in past days.
A light it flashed on those presentiments,
Making me feel with anguish, that, at home,
No ill was needed to fulfil them. I,
I was the spoiler of my own fair hopes.
The thought was one to verify itself,
And o'er me cast a chill that would not yield
To speed of walking, or the eagerness
Felt as I neared my home.
My welcome's warmth
Revived my spirit. When, due greeting had
From Alison and Thornie, I was set
In the old parlour wainscoted, with Kate
And Cache-Cache near on either side,
Aunt Rachel and my father in their chairs
By the great chimney, and the curate deep
In bacchanalian chemistry engaged,
While the log-fire a ruddy glow diffused

O'er all the room, then broke at last the spell—
Once more I was at home. So much was mine
To never-tiring listeners to relate—
The rural turbulence, the nightly fires,
The Union debates, the college talk,
New friends, new studies, all in quick review,
Crossed and re-crossed, and conversation made
Both grave and gay. Details and anecdotes,
Too trivial to be written, endless flowed,
Mingling with questions for my dale-folk friends;
And to my rest I went, with all home charms
Around me in old strength, and Roland's smile
Of old regard illumining my heart.

Yet spite of my long travel, sleep that night
Came troubled and oft broken. Several times
With a vague horror round me I awoke,
Always alike in form, the feeling dim
Of happiness o'erclouded suddenly
By indistinct but terrible dismay.
The latest of those dreams will haunt me yet—
As children we our little gardens owned,
Where the wild mountain-flowers we tried to rear,
Or with more pride some rarer stranger grew.
From those old flower-beds my fancy raised

Another garden plot I knew not where,
In which much seed I'd sown I knew not when.
After long days to see it I was come,
And found it filled with tall, lithe, glistening weeds,
That hissed and wavered in the passing wind.
As I went in, by force resistless drawn,
Round me they closed, and clasped me, twining fast
Like living things; the far ones struggling near,
Writhing and coiling all, like knotted snakes.
I strove to escape, but closer still they clung,
Advance or flight forbidding, till at last,
With sounds of howling in my ears, to earth
I fainting fell, and woke.

Thrice ten long years
Are gone since then, and still I feel the thrill
With which I stretched my limbs, as scarcely free,
And upright sat, in agony of dread
Unequalled since I quelled the Questing Beast.
The howling noise at least was not a dream,
And still around me seemed to twine and cling
Those hideous weeds. Then from my bed I sprang
And sought the casement, panting for fresh air.
Some of our dogs were baying the pale moon,
That in the cold grey sky hung cold, and cast

A chilly light o'er all the ghostly hills.
Except for their long howls, portents of death
In legends held, and the unceasing rush
Of the hoarse waterfalls, the stillness round
Had been intense. No breath of air disturbed
The silent reign of frost. The night-calm soothed
My fevered brain, and turned my mind to peace.
The morrow's sun should set not, I resolved,
Ere all my heart to Cache-Cache I had bared,
And sought her help and counsel. With that thought
To rest returning, sound I slept, nor woke
Till over Glaramara stood the sun.

The wished occasion came not to my hopes
So speedily. The sharpness of the time
Called largely on Roland's kind ministries,
And she fulfilled them, as of old, alone.
A messenger of love, from door to door,
She flitted through the valley, leaving scarce
A foot-print in the snow, but memories
Ne'er from the dale-folk's hearts to be effaced.
Not until Christmas-eve did I obtain
The longed-for converse. Then we walked together
To Arran Force. The winds were still at rest,
And in the calm the frost lost half its power.

We sat awhile beneath the rocky grot,
Our favourite haunt in childhood. All around
The scene was one of frozen fairy-land.
The water trickling down the ruddy crags
Fringed every ledge with pendent icicles,
And o'er the fall the drooping birches bore
Banners of ice, spray-woven; while beneath,
Arran herself rushed down, in dwindled stream,
Robed in like shining raiment. All was white,
Save the red pinnacles and walls of rock;
And all was lonely, for the valley's flocks
Were folded in the homesteads, leaving nought
From his peat-fire to tempt the shepherd forth.
Then 'twas that seated by the maid so dear,
But whom I trembled now to call my own,
I would have opened all my hidden care.
Wiser than I, she stopped me, ere I spoke
More than a word.
"Nay, dearest Walter, nay;"
In her sweet tones she said—"it must not be.
Nothing can now divide us. Faults—no faults
To tell I think are yours; and if there be,
Forgiven they are as if they ne'er had been.
Thoughts, feelings, and opinions—if in these

We differ now, together we shall grow,
Each learning from the other. Watch and pray,
Dear Walter, and with vain things be not vexed,
And to our Father in heaven leave the rest."
She leaned her head upon my arm, as though
Reminding me 'twas hers to claim support,
And mine to give it—where was then my pride?
"I am not worthy—I do not deserve—"
"You will," she said; and added with a smile,
"You think and seek, when you should read and learn.
The time for thinking will come afterwards,
And then you'll not think wrong. Now call me vain,
But say it merrily, and so you'll be
Ready for Christmas."
Wiser in her skill,
Than he who said, therein the sufferer
Must minister to himself, the maiden was
Who thus made cheerfulness the balm for ills
Engendered by self-study. Walking home,
I, too, looked forward, confident with her,
The time would come when all my present cares
Away would vanish, like an evil dream.
The time did come, but not till I had learnt
How near despair those cares might drag me down.

I pass our Christmas revels. 'Twas two days
Before the time when Cambridge called me back,
That all the rest for dinner being met,
Cache-Cache was missing. Daylight lingered yet,
And deeming her delayed in some kind work,
No wonder need we feel, much less alarm.
We waited her in patience. E'en my father,
Strict in such things, would never breathe complaint
At waiting for Roland. But one by one,
The minutes stole away, and o'er the dale
The mountain shadows longer, darker fell.
I would run down to Finsthwaite, and inquire
For tidings of the wanderer.

Soon I learned
That at the hamlet she had been in truth,
But full three hours before, and there had called
On old dame Ullock. No one seemed to know
Where afterwards she went. The people stirred
So little from their homes, no mystery 'twas
That none had seen her. Begging them to seek,
Some vague, dim sense of dread just fluttering
Within my breast, across the fields I flew
To Deepdene through the twilight. Nothing there
Could I discover; Cache-Cache had not been

Seen there at all. Again I urged a search,
And hurried back to Ormathwaite, with fear
Continually increasing; shuddering
At one quick whisper of my throbbing heart,
Recalling old dame Ullock.
All our folk
Were speedily on foot; through Wandale some;
Some up Ormeside to huts of quarrymen;
Others again to similar abodes
High at Rigg-head, the narrow chasm that cleaves
The fells lower down the dale; and others still
On to the hamlet in the valley's gorge.
When every track was filled, I called aside
Old Thornie Hesketh.
"Thornie," I whispered hoarse,
"She called on old dame Ullock. At Lancrigg
She has a daughter sick. I think she must
Have crossed the fell."
"I pray to God not so,"
The old man answered solemnly; "not so,
Dear Master Watty."
"Come with me," I said—
"I fear it, Thornie."
Ah, how fearful is

That calm of mien and tone which veils a heart
Throbbing as though 'twould break.
A coil of rope
The shepherd took, and calling out some dogs,
Away we hurried. By this time the sun
Had sunk behind the mountains, but the snow
Aided the twilight. On the fells around
The dalesmen were afoot. We heard their shouts
From crag to crag resounding, as they cheered
Their dogs upon the quest. We crossed the dale,
Passing the river by the stepping-stones,
And took the zig-zag path that through the wood
There climbs the fell-side. Neither of us spoke.
Why need we fear? The path was one well used;
Roland had trodden it a score of times—
Where was the danger? Vain such questions all!
For at this season, and in frost like this,
We knew the danger well.
The wood was left,
And from the ridge's crest a deep ravine
Yawned on the farther side, down which the path
Wound a mere line along a slope of screes,
Broken by sheer descents of rock, and now
Slippery with frozen snow. At intervals

A stunted birch-tree grew beside the track,
Marking its onward course.
Here Thornie threw
The dogs abroad on the steep slope below—
Ah, the strange thrill with which I marked the act,
The breathless pause that followed, the strained eyes
Searching the treacherous ground! The gloom which wrapped
The depths of the ravine made objects dim
At little distance. Thornie hallooed loud
To guide the dogs, as slowly we advanced,
And sometimes one would answer with a bark.
Vivid to memory all the scene recurs
As if I saw it now—the long white slope,
The stunted birch-trees, Thornie's tall spare form.
Presently where the path a precipice crossed,
A dog barked loud below us. Thornie stopped,
And listened.
"He has found her," mournfully
The old man said—"he's found her, Master Watty."
Without a word, one end of Thornie's cord
I knotted round my waist, then cast it twice
About a birch, and bidding him keep hold,
Went quickly down the slope. 'Twas all too true.

Where the dark crag rose upright through the screes,
Sweet Cache-Cache lay, her face towards the sky,
One arm flung out upon the snow, and one
Beneath her bent. A streak of red there was
On her wan cheek, and one long lock of hair
Strayed from her bonnet, dark amidst the snow.
The dog his barking ceased, and came to lick
My hand. I called triumphantly to Thornie,
Folded sweet Cache-Cache softly in my plaid,
And taking her upon my arm, climbed back,
Holding upon the cord.

"Oh, let me see her,"
The faithful shepherd said, "let me just see her."
The plaid I lifted from her pale still face—
"She is a saint in heaven," the old man said,
And on her cheek his tears like rain fell down.
But I his meaning caught not, and in anger
Pushed him away; then hastened to the ridge,
And faster still descended through the wood.
At Finsthwaite loud I shouted she was found,
And heard the glad news travelling quick along
The neighbouring fells, though little recked I then.
Help, too, I gained, and in our parlour soon,
Upon a couch I laid sweet Cache-Cache down.

Aunt Rachel, and my father, and dear Kate
Were instantly around. One look he gave,
And then my father drew me by the arm
Into another room, there pressing me
Into a chair, and leaving me alone.
Awhile a rustle strange was in the house,
A murmur half suppressed. A horse I heard
Galloping fast away. Then all was still.
I sat benumbed beneath the heavy air.
My father came back softly to my side,
And on my shoulder laid a kindly hand.
I recollect I pressed my cheek upon it.
"My poor boy," then he said, "Cache-Cache is dead."
With him my love I followed to her grave
In Arrandale church-yard. Some memories dim
I cherish of the day—of a great throng,
Men, women, children,—all the dale were there—
And of the hymn they sang when we came near;
Of sobs the service breaking, not my own;
Of the dead falling of the earth upon her,
When ashes they gave to ashes, dust to dust.
A few days after, while I still was sunk
In sorrow's stupor, heedless of all things,
My father came to me, and bade me walk

With him abroad. I passively obeyed.
He led me to the church-yard. Late it was
In afternoon, and not a person stirred
In all the snowy fields.
Beside the grave
My father paused, and on a head-stone near
Rested his hand. The earth so lately moved,
Now frozen rough, and dark amidst the snow,
Was decked with sprays of holly. Kindly done
I know it was, but then to me it seemed
Grotesque and dreary. I was faint with grief—
Why was I there?
But then my father said,
In accents strangely altered—"My dear boy,
Another here is laid, once loved as dear,
Beside poor Cache-Cache."
Ah, his own Marie—
Into his arms I threw myself, and wept.
"My God," I faltered in my loneliness
Retired that night, so uttering in my woe
The plaintive cry from conscience-stricken man
Ever extorted in his sorest need—
"And I was doubting whether e'er again
I should behold the treasure I have lost."

IX.

Struggle.

Christmas its tidings glad of peace on earth,
Good-will towards men, has many times renewed
Since that sad season; and if tears have come
Into my eyes, thus looking back through life,
Not wholly tears of sorrow have they been.
At my right hand a glorious spirit seems
To sit and whisper in those low sweet tones,
Which even on earth of heaven always spoke,
That we are parted only for a day.
Strong in that faith, my Roland's sojourn here
I now recall with pensive tenderness,
And tranquilly await the appointed hour
In hope to meet again.

An altered man

To college I returned, avoiding all
My late companions, save Farquhar and some
Few friends like him. One passionate desire
Filled my whole being; all my spirit yearned
To gain the hope of joining *her* once more.
Before this eager thirst, all other aims
Seemed but of second worth, of little price.
I know not—grand in some men's view may seem
The more than Roman stoicism, which
Can calmly see the grave for ever close
O'er love and friendship. He may be sublime
In boldness who indifferent can stand
Ready alike to accept immortal life,
Or die as die the brutes. 'Tis possible
That some who through long years have lived together,
Nor are in death divided, a new life
May less concern. Nay, we may e'en admit,
That to the dying, when they die in peace
And pure in heart, a false philosophy
May prove the question insignificant.
But what of the survivors?
I know well,
Too well, indeed, this is no argument.
Faith is not won by wishing; one thing 'tis

To seek, another, different far, to find.
The state of mind where nothing is confessed,
Nothing denied, is hardest to o'ercome.
The problems metaphysical that rise
In all religions, being as they are,
Religion's law, the very tests of faith,
Are stubbornest of foes when once installed
In full possession. Starting-point is none,
From whence to assail them. One sole way remains
To vanquish them, and that a paradox,
By feeling them in truth invincible.
This is the close of that high argument
Once to the Romans offered—Who art thou,
O man, that against God repliest? Who?
Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it,
Why hast thou made me thus?
May we not ask,
Why modern doctors rush to undertake
The toil St. Paul rebuked? Why great divines
Pour forth contempt on any luckless wight
Who, following humbly the Apostle's rule,
Questions the range of intellect in faith?
Are they indeed more wise than he who first
The Gentiles won to truth? These problems dark

Are not peculiar to theology.
The antagonism assumed to exist between
Foreknowledge and free-will; the notion man
Can gather of infinitude; the truth
Or semblance of the world external—these
Are points discussed in mere philosophy.
Reason may judge them thus; and instinct, thus—
But reason argues of her names for things,
Not of the things themselves; and logical
As she may be in marshalling her words,
Instinct may better apprehend the facts.
Let reason vanquish instinct then, ere faith,
The nobler champion, deigns to take the field.
Wiselier, perhaps, than our o'erbold divines,
Wrote the Arabian sage:—"Whoever deems
That proofs alone can make truth evident,
Assigns but narrow limits to the love
Of his Creator." Better Luther might
The Apostle understand, when he declared:—
"Could syllogisms be used in things divine,
Then knowledge we should have of them, not faith."
Yet, witness that great Father, who portrayed,
For others' help, his victory o'er doubt,
In those unmatched Confessions—witness he,

Who in his Thoughts expressed the agony
Of wrestling with the reason—witness all
The humbler victims who, by thousands told,
Have known the grief to say with faltering lips
The prayer where lingering doubt still wars with faith—
Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief—
Witness all these, how stern the conflict swells,
When reason once her sovereign's place has seized,
Ere to her proper province she will shrink.
  Pascal is not for doubters. Did he quell
His own perplexities, or was the abyss
Which ever yawned beneath his troubled sight,
Only the image of his inward woe?
A surer guide may St. Augustine prove,
For he attained his end. They err who think
His troubles ended with the paltry trash
Of Manes and his crew. His story leads
Through all the conflicts of this modern age;
He, too, demanded how could faith receive
What reason failed to grasp. One help was his,
Not every man is given to enjoy.
When to a reverend bishop of the Church
Once for her son his sainted mother wailed,
The prelate bade her take good cheer—no son,

So wept, so prayed for, utterly could die.
Monica lived to know the promise true,
And calmly dying, with her parting breath,
" Why should I live ? " she said to that loved son,
Then weeping by her couch—" why should I live,
When in this life I've nothing left to wish ?
One only longing prompted me to stay,
That my dear child a Christian I might know,
Before departing. God has given the boon ;
And ampler than my prayer, the joy to see
My son His faithful servant—Why should I
Dwell longer here ? "
Ah, match this scene of death
At Ostia's little inn, with that beheld
In Athens' prison-cell for ever famed—
Compare Monica with the Pagan sage,
And while the last you honour, still confess
The first more kin—you love the Christian saint.
Few, few can hope like aid. But all may share
The other guide that Augustine possessed.
The Manicheans, cunning in their age,
The Scriptures mocked for nought but old wives' tales ;
And their young pervert, vain in reason's might,
Vain of the crowds that flocked to hear him teach

His rhetoric class at Milan, never cared
Himself to judge how true the charge might be.
But Ambrose there was preaching; Augustine
Heard him with wonder, and his yearning grew
To break a bondage he had learnt to scorn,
And breathe an air whose purity he felt
While yet he breathed it not. From Ambrose' self
Counsel he sought and help; the prelate heard,
And bade him read Isaiah. Ne'er again
Did Augustine the Holy Scriptures slight,
But reading onwards from the marvellous book,
Well chosen his poor rhetoric to shame,
Reading his Bible, and his Bible only,
Soon all his spirit owned the living Word,
And all his heart with Christian hope was filled.
  Came ever to my mind in those dark days
The word my tutor spoke—one book—the Bible.
The task seems easy and the burden light,
But here, as elsewhere, 'tis the first step costs.
You must not read to criticise, or vain,
Nay worse than vain, your study; yet your mind,
Long trained to argue, will not condescend
Simply to listen. Neither must you read
With foregone wish to find what has been found

By men before you. If you pause to ask—
Does this support that sentence of the creed?
How can this verse with such a clause agree?—
Small will your profit be. Too much the text
Has tortured been to aid the doctrines drawn
By men from separate phrases. All who deem
That facts are made by rules, not rules by facts,
Have striven to fix each passage with the sense
That suits their dogma; doing thus their best
To invert the Apostle's saying, and to make
The faith whose ritual freedom to the Jews
A stumbling-block should prove; whose simpleness
To Greeks seem foolishness—a stumbling-block
To all men by its rites, by mysteries
To all men foolishness. The creeds record
How men read Scripture when the Church was young,
And still may serve for symbols of accord
'Twixt men who, having searched the Scriptures, find
In them the creeds. But Scripture must be chief,
Addressing each man now, as was addressed
Each hearer of the Sermon on the Mount,
Each reader of the Letters of St. Paul.
Whoso in Me believeth, he hath life—
Such is the creed of Scripture; not opposed

To some by men constructed afterwards,
But surely not of less authority.
And when in Holy Writ the student reads
Not to receive its teachings, but to seek
Some stated dogma, then it may be feared
Lest creeds make infidels, not guard the faith.
  Oh, cherish well the liberty bequeathed
To English Churchmen by the forefathers
Who drew their ritual from the ancient forms,
But left interpretation wisely free;
And did their best, by widening the base,
And comprehending very different views,
To make the National Church identical
In compass with the Nation. Guard it well—
The freedom to expand, as knowledge grows;
Nor deem theology alone debarred
The privilege of progress. Guard with care
The independence science justly claims;
And think, if Galileo's enemies
Had really proved his doctrine heterodox,
Where now would be their orthodoxy? Change
The name, the story's true to-day as then.
No infidelity could seize the mind,
Fatal as that must follow the belief

That science' revelations contradict
The revelation given to man by God.
'Tis this that captive holds the intellect
Once prisoner made in Doubting Castle's walls,
This dreary inability to see
In Scripture aught except the armoury,
Where every sect its sacred weapons seeks
All others to o'erthrow. The knowledge this,
Which taking place of childhood's innocence,
Blinds men to that which most they long to see.
"I am of Paul," and—"Of Apollos, I"—
These cries haunt every text, and intercept
The otherwise plain sense. So Scripture reads
Only one volume in the vast archives
Of controversial lore. Oh, from the fold
Ye who have strayed, and yearn again to feel
The Shepherd's tender care—oh, cast away
All thought of these divisions. Read as though
No schism ever rent in twain the Church.
Believe, for safely so you may believe,
The more obscure the meaning of a text,
The less that meaning signifies to man.
Pause not to understand, but pause to feel.
So read, and read again, and always read,

Kate having deigned to wed her mis-named swain.
They dwell at Caleb's rectory, and oft
Come o'er to Ormathwaite, where their young folk
To me and Kitty our young days recall,
Sitting with us beneath the rocky arch
When Arran, flooded, thunders to her pool;
Or rambling through the shade of Wandale Wood,
And there with awe, beneath the ancient yews,
Hearing the story of the Questing Beast.
With us, I say. For dear Aunt Rachel, left
A lonely woman by her brother's death,
Soon prayed me to come home, and be the stay
Of her declining years. "Come home," she said,
And ah, for me our sweetest English word
Sweeter than ever sounded, calling me
Back to the dale where everything around,
Each rock and tree, each winding of each stream,
Each fold of every hill, to mind restores
Some word or look of her in by-gone days
There wont with me to walk. So home I came,
And dear Aunt Rachel, blithe and jocund still,
Descending gently down the vale of years,
In the old house dwells quietly with me;
And sitting in her chimney-corner tells

Her memories of my mother and Roland.
On Sundays, leaning on my arm, she goes
Across the fields to church, where our old friend,
The curate, reverend now with length of days,
Still reads the service in those wailing tones
He used when I was young. I keep the place
Familiar in those years. And when the storm
Sweeps in its strength down Glaramara's coom;
When under the fierce blast the birches bend,
And on the fells the foaming ghylls are white,
And through the ancient hollies rises high
The tempest's dithyramb, I recollect
How then my hand was pressed—joy fills my heart
At the sure hope of meeting her again,
Who sleeps near by, where a plain headstone bears—
Roland Delaunay, loved as Cache-Cache here.

THE END.

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